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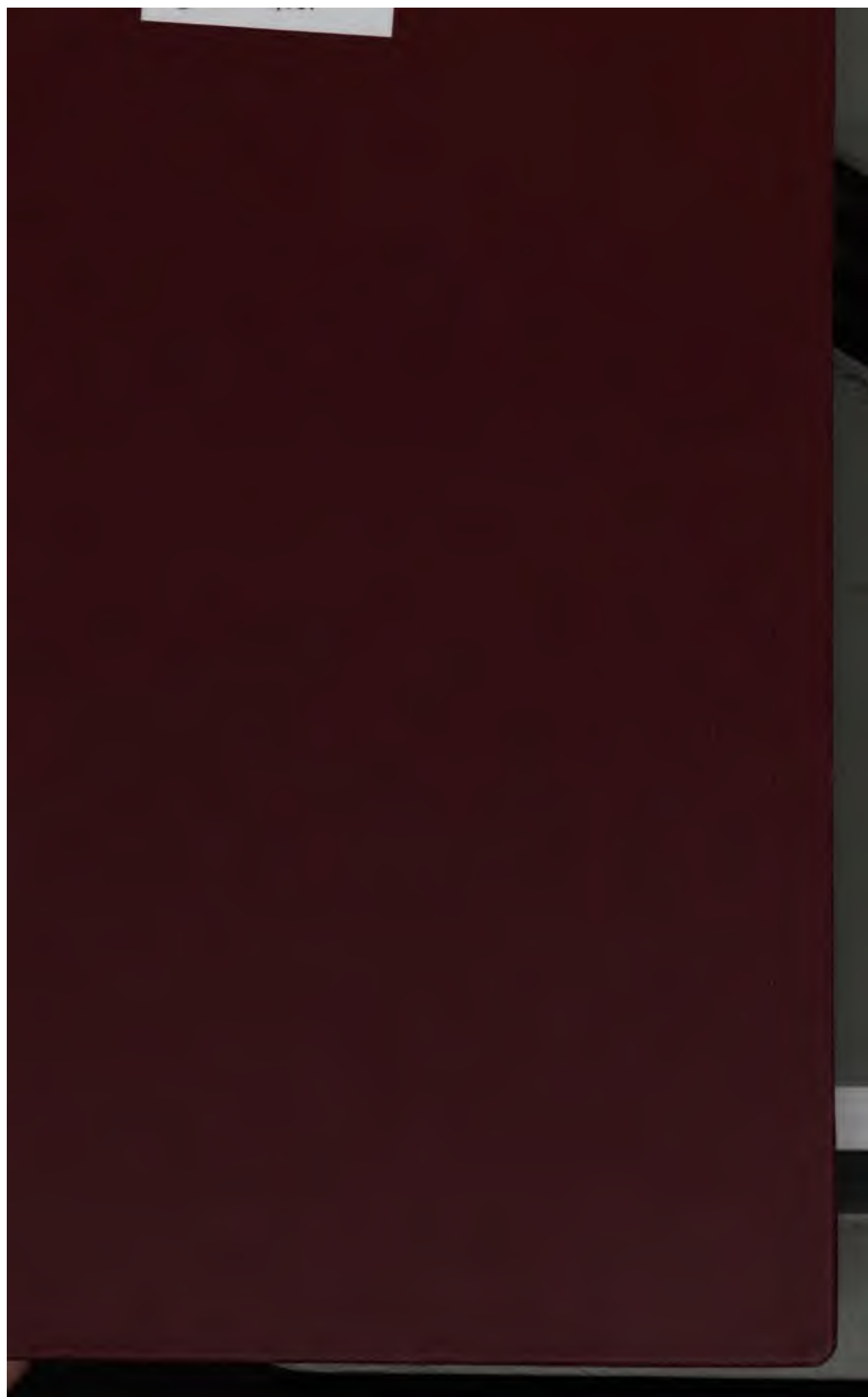
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7

GREEK AND GOTHIC

PROGRESS AND DECAY

IN

THE THREE ARTS

OF

ARCHITECTURE, SCULPTURE, AND PAINTING.

BY THE

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P R E F A C E.

THE latter part of this book has already appeared before the public, under the kind editorship of Miss Yonge, in the *Monthly Packet*. It there found readers enough to invite republication; and it has seemed best to add a connected sketch of ancient Greek and Roman arts and monuments. I hope the whole may form a readable handbook, or guide to a course of study. It may possibly show the way into a department of history which becomes daily of more importance. Ancient monuments yield to time, destruction, and restoration, and lose their value as documents; or new light is thrown on what remains. The Muse of History is like the Sibyl in respect of burning her books; but their relics are always worth their price.

I do not know of any other connected account of parallel progress and decay in the Three Arts of Architecture, Sculpture, and Painting, since Lord Lindsay's *Christian Art*.

If that work were properly read by students of history, with due reference to Seroux d'Agincourt, and other standard illustrated works; with some travel, with study of originals in museums—in short, with the energy commonly thrown into studies by which money is to be got—then there might hardly be room for the present work. But it should be considered that photography has come to the aid of historic and artistic study since Lord Lindsay's edition of 1846: and that a student may now, to all intents and purposes, inspect the present condition of buildings, statues, and even pictures, without leaving England. Besides, large new museums like South Kensington are open for reference, and educational collections of casts, &c., are at any rate in course of formation in this country on the model of the Dresden and Berlin galleries. The appearance of Mr. J. H. Parker's *Monumental Photographs* would of itself be a *raison d'être* or a semi-historical book in connection with them.

I have found a certain number of repetitions quite unavoidable here, since the two decorative arts are viewed as connected in dependence on architecture and history alike; and one is naturally led over the same ground more than once. But I hope from the success of a part of the book, that a sufficient number of persons may be able to read the whole; perhaps to consult some of its authorities, and follow the course of study to which its existence is

due. Perhaps painters and sculptors, or intending travellers, may find it of use ; and there may be students of art who have begun (as I did nearly forty years ago) with attempts at naturalist landscape, and who have been led on to deeper and wider interest in art itself, and in the chequered history of her connection, not only with the nobler pleasures of man's life, but with his greatest achievements on earth and highest spiritual prospects hereafter.

R. ST. JOHN TYRWHITT,

Christ Church, Oxford.

CONTENTS.

BOOK I.

ETHNIC.

PART I.—GREEK.

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	3

CHAPTER I.

S. PAUL ON MARS' HILL	9
---------------------------------	---

CHAPTER II.

THE PARTHENON	22
-------------------------	----

CHAPTER III.

THE EARLY DECADENCE	34
-------------------------------	----

CHAPTER IV.

PAINTING	46
--------------------	----

PART II.—ROMAN.

CHAPTER I.

GREEK ART AT ROME	PAGE 65
-----------------------------	------------

CHAPTER II.

GRECO-ROMAN PAINTING—THE WALLS OF POMPEII	97
---	----

BOOK II.

CHRISTIAN.

PART I.—CONSTRUCTION.

CHAPTER I.

THE CATACOMBS AND THEIR PAINTINGS	113
---	-----

CHAPTER II.

THE SCRIPTURAL CYCLES OF THE CATACOMBS	129
--	-----

CHAPTER III.

CHRISTIAN SYMBOLISM	150
-------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER IV.

THE BASILICA	180
------------------------	-----

CONTENTS.

xi

CHAPTER V.

	PAGE
THE BASILICA	195

CHAPTER VI.

THE CROSS AND DOME	208
------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER VII.

TRANSITIONS	226
-----------------------	-----

PART II.—DECORATION.

CHAPTER VIII.

MATERIALS AND MOSAIC ORNAMENT	244
---	-----

CHAPTER IX.

CHRISTIAN SCULPTURE	278
-------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER X.

MSS. AND MINIATURES	318
-------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER XI.

THE LOMBARDS	347
------------------------	-----

APPENDIX	371
--------------------	-----

INDEX	375
-----------------	-----

ERRATA.

Page 67, line 16, strike out comma after *Æmilius*.

„ 160, „ 22, *for* “*Loves*,” *read* “*Loaves*.”

„ 227, „ 20, *for* “*Spalato*,” *read* “*Spalatro*.”

„ 228, „ 2 from bottom, *for* “*Spalato*,” *read* “*Spalatro*.”

„ 334, „ 4 from bottom, *for* “*Babula*,” *read* “*Rabula*.”

„ 361, „ 18, *for* “*Apomcea*,” *read* “*Apamcea*.”

„ 367, note, line 4 from bottom, *after* “*S. Prassede*” *insert* (, though it must be).

„ 371, note, line 2, *for* “*Sevorus*,” *read* “*Severus*.”

BOOK I.
E T H N I C.



GREEK AND GOTHIC.

PART I.—GREEK.

INTRODUCTION.

THE illustration of history by works of Fine Art, or of whatever may stand for it at particular periods, is now felt to be a regular department in the study of human record. Arts are landmarks of chronology, and historical characteristics of generations. Men must be judged in part by the works they leave behind them ; and often literally nothing remains of their deeds, except fragments of sculpture or architecture ; sometimes "all their triumphs shrink into a coin." And though this may not be the case with the earliest Christian or post-Augustan ages, it begins to be so directly after the age of Constantine. Chronicles grow barren and untrustworthy ; and relics of buildings and carvings, mosaic and MS. become more valuable as authentic record. A MS., for instance, is valuable for its contents ; but it must be somebody's MS., and may have a personal value also. We do not know much of S. Patrick or S. Columba ; but without the least sentimentalism or misplaced feeling, our knowledge and power of conception about history receives decided addition when we see the book of Durrow,¹ with its epigraph in the latter saint's own hand.

¹ Cf. *Gospels of S. Columba* : Trinity College, Dublin. Westwood's *Palaeographia Sacra*. Irish Biblical MSS., Plate ii. 1, and text. Also in Anglo-Saxon and Irish MSS.

On the flyleaf of the MS. itself are these words :—"Liber autem hic scriptus est a manu ipsius B. Columbekille per spatium 12 dierum an 500."

At the end :—"Rogo beatitudinem tuam, sancte presbyter Patrice, ut quicumque

Original works of art are documents, in short, whatever they look like. They may be rude or shattered, or have been always beautiful, or have lost their beauty; or what is left of it may only irritate minds untaught to feel it; as with so much early Christian work. But there they are, and the student must gain by a certain knowledge, first, of what they are at present, secondly, of what they were in their first glory. He will need all the help he can get in the study of Dark-Age History, to support him with sense of truth and reality, through his necessary perusal of painfully written and dubious chronicles.

What an impulse it would give to the history of this period, if an illustrated Ammianus, or a Paul the Deacon, pictured like the Vatican Virgil (of perhaps nearly the same date) could turn up in some Italian library! It will hardly do to dwell on great supposed results in this matter, or some new Simonides will go straightway and discover what we are calling for.

There is no doubt that all historians of the decaying empire, from Gibbon to Milman, feel the distress of its decay, and the melancholy of their study. But the continuity of history must be preserved, and the Dark Ages bridged over somehow. We who are "Goths," or Teutons, or Northmen, if we are to understand ourselves, must learn how much we are indebted to the constructive science of Rome, and the creative art of Athens: to the law and language of the one, and the thought and language of the other. We all know Greek from Roman and Gothic; we want to know more of how Goths learnt from Rome, and through Rome from Greece.

It has been observed that the arts are the one faint light of the Dark Ages. In the Iconoclastic period, their light is that of conflagration; and soon after it they seem to die away from sight, to be renewed in the earliest Tuscan Renaissance of the eleventh century; but the eighth alone sufficiently proves the connection between art-history and secular or

hunc libellum manu tenuerit, meminerit Columbæ scriptoris, qui hoc scripsi ipsemet Evangelium per xii. dierum spatium, gratia Domini nostri."

Below, in a contemporary hand:—"Ora pro me, frater mi: Dominus tecum sit."

ecclesiastical record. We shall have to refer abundantly to Seroux D'Agincourt ; but this remark of his about the early Christian works of the Catacombs has its best place here : " Une circonstance particulière m'a imposé la loi de parler de ces cimetières souterrains ; c'est que les productions de la sculpture et de la peinture qui ont servi à les orner sont à peu près les seuls monumens des premières siècles de la décadence "—the only remaining tokens of the failing energies of the Empire, described in words by her decadent historians, and corresponding in mutual evidences of decay.

After the fourth and fifth centuries, three things seem left of the ancient order to marshal and guide the new Teutonic chaos. There is the Faith of Christ, represented by Church organizations ; there are the constructive laws of Rome ; the scientific principles by which a polity may be framed, or a city be built to last ; there are relics and principles of the arts of Greece both decorative and constructive ; and of her great thoughts. All knowledge is virtually Græco-Roman, or Greek by invention and Roman by annexation. The inspirations of epic, of tragedy and dithyramb, or the grammar which secured their purity of expression ; the profound speculation of ethic and metaphysic, and their dialectic of accurate definition and strict deduction—all first attempts at experimental science ; the language of the Gospels, and the logic of the Fathers—all this comes to us from Athens through Rome, or else by way of Alexandria.

Readers of history may wonder more at what is left than what is gone, of the great monuments of antiquity. They are despoiled or removed again and again, and they perish. Sculptures and paintings are assembled *en masse* in some great conquering metropolis, and destroyed in her destruction. Rome collects the plunder of the elder world, and the new world sacks and burns Rome and her booty. In her hour of conquest, as Juvenal said—

" Magnorum artificem frangebant pocula miles
Ut phaleris gauderet equus . . . "

In the hour of vengeance, the citizens and soldiers of Rome, such as were left of either, could think of no better use for

the sculpture of mighty hands, than burning them into lime, or throwing them on the heads of storming parties.

The interest of the great drama shifts place from age to age ; but its ruined theatres remain for yet a while. Perhaps they are deserted and mournfully silent, bereft of the passionate audience and the puissant action which once made them echo to the world's debate. Perhaps rest is denied the fallen city, and her ruins must also perish ; swept aside by trade and travel, which know no awe, and thronged with ever new crowds of clamorous masquers, " mimes in the form of God most High," who act out what is in this world the tragedy of His purpose. Yet relics of the beauty of the great world's spectacle are left. And they seem to show at times a peculiar power of enforcing on the modern English mind the lesson it is slowest to learn—that the past was once present, and the present will be of the past. They show how the past glides through ages to the present, like Heraclitus' river, which not only moved but suffered change, and whose progress was flux and dissolution.

One way or other, the arts are sure to be well represented at the central arenas of the world's action. An imperial city or race often invites and adopts great workmen, who may have been born and bred apart, under circumstances rather happy than imperial. Athens was centre of both arts and arms for a while, Sparta being a kind of Rome without genius or governing power, where men knew only how to die. Rome did more than conquer and collect, in bestowing on architecture her great gifts of the arch, the cupola vault, and the scientific use of brick. In spite of the destruction of centuries, she remained, to Brunelleschi's day, and after him, centre of the architecture of state, and size, and science : as well as the exhibition room of Italy, for men whose hearts and studios were in Florence, Pisa, or Venice. One must be with the eagles, at least, to observe the transition between the lintel and the round arch, which is the Rubicon of Greek and Roman building.

With the second century comes a period of acknowledged decadence, and it ends in the Byzantine transition, which carries us into and through the Dark Ages. It is not

necessary to consider the exact accuracy or justice of that epithet: but there can be no doubt of that darkness of extreme distress which descended on the falling Empire with Attila, was renewed by Alboin, and perhaps was first lightened by the battle of Tours, when "the swords of the Arab and Lombard were at once shaken" over France, Italy, and Christendom. Another period of despair follows in the West, with the break-up of the Carolingian Empire. But the ruling races submit to the imperishable Faith: the cities of Northern Italy prepare for independence of the German Empire: with them stone architecture begins to take precedence of brick: the pointed arch appears, whether under Norman, German, or Saracen influence; vertical lines take the lead instead of horizontal; and story is no longer unequivocally piled on story. In the early thirteenth century, a great and true renaissance takes place in sculpture. Niccola Pisano leaves his Byzantine, or mediæval-Greek masters, to study the Chase of Meleager, a bas-relief perhaps of ancient Athens, brought home in Pisan galleys. The Lombard had already acquired the Greek spirit of Representation, and copied nature with barbaric effort: and he had taken such hints from Roman, Græco-Roman, or Byzantine ornament, as his monk-teachers gave him. He had not yet "combined his information:" he had not yet brought Nature and Decoration, or Beauty and Ornament, into right relation in his mind. Niccòla Pisano saw that the work before him was more beautiful, and more like Nature, than all he had seen before, and that Nature is the source of ornament as well as beauty. He fell on the old style, or method of study, of Athens and Argos. He saw that the thing to do was to look at men and horses first; then at the rules by which men and horses were to be got into the decoration of a building; that there had been older Greeks than his good Byzantine masters; and finally, that the elders did sculpture much more *like* than their successors. So he began to study Nature as Greeks had studied her, emulating their realism in their highest subjects, and combining with it that delight in all minor work of God's hand which is the sustaining and impelling force of all the art we call Gothic, bad as that title is.

The earliest ages of the Christian Church had made use of carved or painted symbol to convey its highest thoughts. That had been done before, in Egypt and in Greece; but new forces came with "the new Superstition" into Roman life. It gave life more significance, it had more ideas to express, it had much to set forth which it only saw darkly as in a glass; and that could be shown by symbol only. Men had found new unlimited hopes in death, new purity of life. Themselves almost beneath the contempt of the Imperium, they believed in One despised. Then they were known as a pernicious superstition, and driven to dens and caves of the earth; and there they buried all faithful dead together. They lay round their martyrs, who were the seed of the Church. Thither the survivors bore their habit of symbol and picture teaching, till the tufa vaults were clad with images of their Shepherd, Vine, Rock; with the types of His Death and Resurrection, His Person and miracles of mercy. These subjects, or the earliest of them, were treated in classic forms in a Primitive age, with some of the Greek grace of older times; they have been continued into mediæval and modern work. They were the work of Greek Christians. They might have been renewed under the Vitruvian or Cinque-Cento Renaissance, had that movement cared for Christianity, or been really devoted to Greek art. But it was in fact, and it has continued to be, alike in Italy, France, and England, a renewal of the science, the pomp, and pedantry of post-Augustan Rome. Our own age calls itself Christian, and a section of it, perhaps large and certainly loud, tell it it does not believe in Christ. In as far as it follows the Renaissance, it adopts the taste and morals, not of Heathens who did believe in Zeus, but of Pagans who did not. In as far as its taste is pedantic or barbarous, it may be endured; but when it describes itself as Hellenic, we cannot but remark that it has very little title to that name. The chief object of the early part of this book is to dismiss the appeal made by the modern Atheistic Renaissance to Greek Art and Life, as if they countenanced and encouraged its own nihilism.

CHAPTER I.

S. PAUL ON MARS' HILL.

A BOOK called *Art Teaching of the Primitive Church*, S. P. C. K., 1874, has been, I believe, found useful by students of ecclesiastical, and perhaps of secular history. It will be referred to, with other works of greater importance, in the following pages, which will contain a short list of books of reference. All of them, even to the complete set of Parker's photographs, should be found in every large collection of books ; and all but one or two in most libraries of moderate size.

The present work takes a wider range, sufficiently indicated by the titles of its four books or sections. It will begin with a sketch of the progress or decadence (as different people may consider it at different times) of the three arts of Architecture, Sculpture, and Painting ; starting from the age of Pheidias, which is assumed as the culminating point—at least, of the two first. It will not touch their archaic periods ; we are concerned with their gradual decline ; with their adoption and diffusion by means of Roman rule ; with such monumental fragments of their splendour as have been preserved for us, generally from the wrecks of Rome ; and with such principles and examples of their technical beauty as have been preserved for us, chiefly through Byzantine or monastic artists. It is possible to assert the existence of a Byzantine Renaissance, or renewal of activity in art ; but it is more convenient to consider Byzantine art as the survival of Græco-Roman or Classical tradition in Church hands, until

the true Lombard-Etrurian Renaissance, when Greek study of nature was revived or emulated by Niccola Pisani. This appears to me to be the true dividing period or turning-point of modern art.

But, having to do with much secular, or ethnic, or profane work, I propose to treat it from the standing-point of the Christian Church. There is practically no other hypothesis of art possible, except the Atheistic or Materialistic. Things are either by Divine Order, or they all resolve themselves into concourse of atoms ; and atoms cannot make Pheidias or the Elgin frieze ; or if they can, they must have an excellent spirit in them. In giving account of art or works of art, one is led by necessity to try to account for the spirit that is in the artist ; and if such a thing exists at all, it is my opinion that English Christianity gives the best obtainable hypothesis and account of its existence and developments.

It seems that we have to admit and regret the existence of several mistaken tendencies of the British mind, as to art and those devoted to it. First, to look on the whole thing with suspicion, as immoral or irreligious ; secondly, with contempt as unprofitable ; thirdly, to select its worst forms ; fourthly, to invest them with a vulgarity which seems to be inseparable from some of its own prevailing weaknesses. Every writer on modern art or its history must necessarily come in contact with these four heads of Suspicion, Contempt, Frivolity, and Vulgarity ; and I am privileged in having to deal with the works of dead workmen, for death involves deliverance from these, among other evils.

In speaking of the Greek spirit and its great achievements, we find Art and Religion obviously and inseparably connected, in principle and in detail. Something, accordingly, will have to be said of Greek religion ; and the key-note of all that is to be said will be found in the words of S. Paul at Athens : " Whom ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you." S. Paul knew Menander and Aratus, and he must, in all probability, have known Pheidias by name and history. He spoke on Mars' Hill, just below the Parthenon, surrounded by gods and heroes. They were idols to him and nothing at all ; except that his spirit was stirred within him by a greater

Spirit when he saw men given over so entirely to them.¹ He spoke to the following points ; and if his language to idolaters is very different from that of Tertullian or Augustine, it is to be remembered that they wrote without the Apostle's clear vision of his Master's will, and with the memory of centuries of persecution in the name of false gods. The Athenians as yet had not seen and hated.

1. Athenians are "too superstitious," or inclined to irrational fear of an unknown God, without love for Him, He being, in fact, unknown as to His love for them.

2. This Unknown God is now preached to them, *i.e.*, He is made known, as to their concern with Him.

3. All these images are attempts to symbolise Him : to see Him who is only to be felt after. The use of them is a sin of ignorance, and always has been one.

4. Nevertheless, in ignorantly seeking the God Whose offspring they are, and know themselves to be, they obey His guidance : and He "winks at" all times of their sin of ignorance in this worship until now.

5. But now He commands Athenians and all men everywhere to repent, and believe in one risen from the dead.

This strikes directly at the Greek propensity and supreme faculty of representation ; of setting before itself gods in man's image : whereas man was made in God's image ; and, as Minucius Felix said afterwards, "What image shall we make of God, when, if you think aright, man is himself the image of God?" (*Octav.* ix. *circ.* A.D. 220.)

Now, we have no reason to suppose either that S. Paul was afraid of his audience, or that they were particularly indignant with him. Some mocked, others would hear him again. We may suppose that those who were willing to do so may have retained a certain traditional Monotheism, which had no doubt sadly decayed since the time of Pheidias ; but which Professor Zeller asserts and proves to have been the practical faith of the best men in Athens—that is to say, of the highest intellects and noblest lives—all through that and the succeeding age. On this S. Paul takes his place and lays his foundation. He has a belief in one Divinity or *Θεῖον* to

¹ "The city full of idols," margin v. 16.

build on, and digs down to that as a rock : on it the perfect faith may be edified. He has to clear away the impediments of Greek superstition, or *Deisidæmonia*, which rested, as far as it was a form of positive faith, partly on Homeric mythology, partly on a comparatively harmless natural Pantheism. *Deisidæmonia* said, "There is no doubt a Zeus ; perhaps Homer and Hesiod are wrong about Him, and He really is just and not unjust, all-powerful and not limited, God and not ungodly. But there are certain personal beings who are His sons or daughters, or parts of Him, and they are all about you. He shows himself in thunder, lightning, and in rain ; they can take on themselves a human body, and let you see it and feel it too. They have all sorts of likes and dislikes ; they like the blood of bulls and goats, and incense, fine flour, and honey, and black sweet wine, rich *pepla*, and what not ; they like pretty much what you like. They are in your image or like you, only much bigger and handsomer. You must give them what they want, or it will be the worse for you, and they are everywhere. Make their likenesses or icons ; of marble or of ivory and gold if you can : you honour your tutelary Deity—that is to say, what there is of Zeus in this city of Athens—by kneeling, or dancing, or pouring libation before *Athene*, or *Apollo*, or *Theseus*, your own national *Heracles*."

This is the most favourable view of Greek worship, and the most moderate demand of *Deisidæmonia*. It is not fetichism she asks for : she only wants symbolism of two kinds, sacrificial and iconic ; by blood of victims and by the graven image. You are not to worship the marble, or ivory and gold, but a god, or hero son of Zeus, through and by its means. And perhaps a majority of the best and best taught men in Athens understood this, from age to age. There were some in all ranks who believed in nothing but their own craft or daring :—*Alcibiades*, *Cleon*, and *Critias* would not care much for the Unseen Zeus or Unknown God. These were the eager scholars of the rhetorical sophists, or trainers for practical life. Many more fell into fetichism, and adored not *Phedias's* Zeus or *Athene* so much as rude ancestral *Xoana* ; hideous old wooden images which had once or again been

known to fall on their knees, or wink, or cry, or perspire, or strike somebody blind, or do good or evil in a tangible way. And the curious thing is, that not only Nicias, the timid worthy Deisidæmon, the "religious man" of Athens, may have worshipped in this way, but that the strong Athenian scoundrel was often much inclined to do the same. He would not ask Pheidias to help him to imaginative conception of Zeus in glory armed with thunder, or of Athene in battle with ægis and spear: he would go to Eumolpidæ or Ceryces, or brotherhoods who possessed ancestral secrets of rites which had power with the gods. The really evil superstitions of Athens were minor mysteries, and rites of incantation, and back-stairs approaches to deities who could be got at and made to take the worse cause. One can see that the worse a man was, supposing him not to have attained to consistent Atheism and denial of right, wrong, and judgment—which views were not yet formulated—the more he would want to get invisible powers on his side, whenever it struck him that there might be such things. Unscrupulous Athenians, and the whole population of Athens, had their superstitious side, and on two or three known crises it proved ruinous.¹ In short, Greek ways of prayer and approach to God differed like our own. Socrates would stand alone in silent prayer to the Theion without altar or image. And there was given him, he said, a Dæmon or spiritual guide, who would not let him do wrong or speak for evil, and on whose prohibition he always waited. Socrates indeed desired and felt after God, and looked upwards, desiring Him beyond all things: and he had his reward. The worldly man would ask for worldly things; and the unjust man for worldly things at any price. He could not probably go straight and ask Zeus of Olympia to help him in wrong; he would try some idol which was warranted to have the God in it, and whose priesthood knew the proper approaches and fees—knew how much reward of iniquity the Gods wanted, that they might favour his iniquity. Such beauty as the Pheidian sculptures

¹ As in their belief in Nicias's good fortune: in his own fatal hesitation about the eclipse at Syracuse: in the panic of the Hermæ, and the execution of the generals of Arginusæ.

possessed, tending to call out pure awe, and vague conceptions of nobler existence, must have been entirely against gross superstition and immoral conceptions of Deity. We cannot say how far the persecution and death of Pheidias may have been urged on by the fetichistic or family priesthoods; but he certainly was involved in the general accusations of irreligion which were directed against the friends of Pericles; and every idea conveyed by his work went against the power and profits of these corporations. Any Greek who was near realising the idea that there was a Being of whom the Olympian Zeus was a sign, would be beyond the thought of bribing him or coercing him by money or ceremonial. And such practices were the worst form of Deisidæmonia.

Now, as Professor Zeller has shown, it is clear that a large number of thoughtful men of the Periclean and later ages had arrived at the thought of one Supreme Fate or Zeus, in some sense the Father of gods and men, in some sense also the Judge of all the earth, who would do right. Well, said S. Paul to some such persons before him, after 500 years—such a Father is; and He dwelleth not in temples made with hands—and He is not as you are; so have done with your anthropomorphisms and images of Him. But dwell on Him as Father and just Judge; then you will be able to go on to what I have to say, about His Son being alike our Redeemer and our Judge, the Man Whom He hath ordained. Some were in fact able to do so, and clave to Him and believed. Such men had been prepared to receive the Christian faith by their antecedent religion or Deisidæmonia. And in v. 30 above quoted, the Apostle comforts them concerning their fathers. The times of the ignorance of Pericles and Pheidias, Socrates and Plato, God winked at, saith Paul.

The Homeric mythology and idolatry grew naturally, as Professor Max Müller has shown, from the early Aryan semi-panthéism which deified the powers of nature, saw God in clouds, and heard Him in the wind. Materialist or evil panthéism means that there is no God except clouds and wind, or nothing nearer Him than they. But there was certainly a Greek spirit of awe, veneration, delight, and enjoyment of nature, which peopled woods and streams

with spiritual presences, and connected the beauty of things with Deity. Zeus had made the oak grow out of the acorn, and spread wide across, and be exceeding great and noble; and its greatness, &c., He had also made to depend on His daughter the Dryad, who lived in it. She must perish or depart when her oak was cut down, her Naiad sister must die if her fountain was dried up: but meanwhile they were there, they made things lovely, and they were a spiritual presence in the land. This was why the land was sacred, and subject to pollution if crime were committed in it. A foul deed defiled the land, because it was hateful to the indwelling gods of the land. Greek pantheism or polytheism to higher minds meant little more, in fact, than a sense of the abiding presence of Deity, personified in children of God older and greater than man. This was the better side of the national Deisidæmonia which made Athens "full of idols" and temples large and small, in town or country. And the same feeling has the same effect in the Christian polytheism of Southern Europe in our own day. Tombs with funeral chambers, and sekoi or sacella for heroes, are exactly like chapels and shrines of saints. Indeed, the degrees of worship which S. John Damascenus (I believe) first formulated—*dulia*, *hyperdulia*, and *latria*, reverence, devotion and worship—seem to have had distinct existence in the mind of every practical son of Cecrops.

No view or persuasion can be more utterly at variance with history than that which regards Greeks as irreligious or non-religious people, or connects their art with a Nature-worship of orgies, and a morality of sensualism. That is an improvement of the Renaissance partly, but much more of the Revolution. On the other hand, Mr. Ruskin's representation of the Athenian agriculturist as a Puritan sort of Northern farmer, is founded partly on Hesiod, partly on a number of picturesque passages from the *Odyssey*; and perhaps is not very like the real country-citizen. A Homeric Athens is unreal: and all views and ideals of citizens of any period require, to say the least, wide allowance for variation, even when the period is fixed. If Mr. Ruskin had ever been able to set forth his view of religion, or of any period at which he supposes genuine

religion to have existed, without the collateral purposes of pestering the bishops and clergy of the Anglican Church, he would have obtained far more attention from a far less fickle audience, and we should have been spared much grotesque invective. Nevertheless, the chapter on Classical Landscape, in vol. iii. of *Modern Painters*, p. 173, may be called a work of unique excellence, as a realisation of Greek character and thoughts on Nature : and many parts of *Aratra Pentelici* bearing on the same subject are almost of equal value. Mr. Ruskin is human, like most of us : being human, he is sometimes right and sometimes wrong ; but these and other of his works will be worthy of careful study for very many years to come.

I mean then to speak of Greek art as the work of human creatures more like than unlike to ourselves—that is to say of Theists, to whom the love and fear of an unknown God seemed possible : of beings capable and conscious of sin—that is to say, who fell short by personal frailty, of a system of morality which had a right to command them : of human beings included in the Scheme of Redemption. It is no use, except for polemical purposes, to consider them as ideally immoral, or as ideally happy and unconscious of virtue. Their virtues are often extolled as against the Christian standard ; their vices are picturesquely set forth, as if vice itself had been virtuous, till Christ forbade it. Whatever alterations or restrictions the Christian Faith made in the general standard of heathen morality at the time of its first preaching, it will not be denied that S. Paul's account of that general standard is substantially correct for Greece ; nor, consequently, that elevation and restrictions were much needed. Even in the Pheidian age, two great social sources of degeneracy were open. Slavery was universal, and women without respect. The existence of a large slave population, male and female, must, will, and invariably does, lead to habits of violence and cruelty, and to general immorality and impurity of life. The Oriental seclusion and want of culture under which maidens and mothers were kept in Athens destroyed all tenderness and respect of family relation ; already endangered by general looseness of life, and the

universal preference of educated men for the society of the educated Hetæra. When a man is brought up in disrespect for his mother, he will not be long in trying his strength with his father; and the generation of Marathon and Salamis could not transmit their patriotism or their discipline to their descendants. In Rome, supreme devotion to the state was handed down with as regular inheritance as lands or arms; because all duties of the household, to gods and kindred, were enforced on men and women from their first youth, and all lived under strict law from infancy.¹ The national consequences of social immorality are recognised in the history of every race on earth; and there is no reason for shutting our eyes to them in that of Athens, because Athens built the Parthenon for a Maiden Wisdom, before she herself became hopelessly impure and unwise. The brighter side of Athenian life was to rejoice in beauty, to seek true beauty as symbolic of the Good; to be content with Nature and one's-self; to live in that balanced *Sophrosyne*, by which every man knew what every part of him was fit for, and what he himself was fit for. But it made no allowance for failure or ignorance, and had not heard of forgiveness of sin. And Christian self-distrust, restraint, unrest, repentance, and hope of forgiveness, sad as it all is, nevertheless makes a life better, and happier to lead, than that of the Athenian self-assertion and self-centre: haunted by the *Θεῖον φθονερόν*, or in terror of the *Erinnyes*.

There is a note in the Master of Balliol's edition of *S. Paul's Epistles* (vol. ii. p. 76, ed. 59) which may be read with advantage by all who study Greek art, more particularly if they are aware how greatly we are ourselves indebted to it. At all events its good has survived its evil, and some of its greatest achievements may teach noble lessons to our own people. But this is the end of the drama of self-assertion and self-regulation; played out under the happiest circumstances, in small states with ample elbow-room, with

¹ See Mahaffy's *Social Greece*, p. 420, on Roman *gravitas*, or adherence to a bargain, and quotation on Greek slipperiness, from *Cicero pro Cæcina*: "Fidem nunquam ista natio coluit."

unmatched intellect, in a chosen climate, amidst great trial, much glory, ever-present beauty :—

“ If the inner life had been presented to us of that period ‘which in political greatness and in art is the most brilliant ‘epoch of humanity, we should have turned away from the ‘sight with loathing and detestation. The greatest admirer of ‘old heathen virtues, the man endowed with the finest sensibilities for beauty and form, would feel at once that there is ‘a great gulf fixed between us and them, which no willingness ‘to make allowance for the difference of ages and countries ‘would enable us to pass. There are vices which have existed in modern times to a far greater extent than in ancient ; ‘there are virtues in ancient times which have never been ‘exceeded ; but there are vices also which are not even ‘named amongst us. It is a sad but useful lesson, that the ‘noblest simplicity in art may go along with

‘ Rank corruption ruining all within.’

‘ Neither is it untrue to say that there was a thread by which ‘they were linked together.’^{*}

The expression Greek and Gothic Spirit may be allowed, and may be taken to mean the ideal or prevailing tendency of effort in the works of either race. If any educated person were asked to distinguish the Greek spirit of creative art from Gothic, he would probably say that one was cheerful and even, the other melancholy and aspiring. If he had to explain himself he would go on to observe that the cheerfulness and melancholy were traceable to inherited constitution, and that again to climate, external conditions, and religion, or habit of contemplating the spiritual world. But he would understand that architecture is a matter in which external conditions dictated varied necessities in a common-sense way to Goth and Greek alike ; so that if the latter had been transported to

^{*} For the earlier, or Homeric age, the reader should refer to Mr. Mahaffy’s comparison between *Homer* and *Hesiod*, pp. 71—76. Its importance is that it allows us no age of sentiment about Greece, and precludes modern aspiration to a Pagan golden-age. Sad contrasts between rich and poor, between the life of a privileged class and the hard struggle of the citizen-farmer ; boastful cruelty and sordid degradation ; dull contempt for women, are common to Hellenic as to other history.

the Cassiterides, he would certainly have covered in his hypæthral temples, and that, too, with roofs high pitched enough to shoot off a winter's snow. All builders are for ever united in, the purpose of getting houses to their mind and needs, and their methods and forms must vary according to their materials. If this be true, the history of architectural and other art is a part of a study of men's necessities, spirits and culture, that is to say, an integral part of history.

Again, if the arts are thus connected with the spirits of men they will be dependent on their religion. The family will have its Lares, its domestic altars, not without ornament of painting and sculpture ; the community will have its temple or Temenos ; the Christian Ecclesia will have its church or assembly or meeting-house of the Lord's people. Without prior reference to Egypt and Assyria, there is no doubt that from the days of Pheidias to those of the Primitive Church, and from thence to the first Pisan Renaissance, art has been specially connected with religion.* Granting all the beauties and merits of Ethnic art in the Augustan age, there is no doubt that it passed into the hands of the Christian Church, and was by her transmuted, but preserved from utter oblivion. As for decadence in her keeping, Greek art was "decadent" enough long before the fourth century A.D. For the light and beauty and moderation and true "Charis" of Athenian art, it was by that time just as much a thing of collections and museums as it is now. Rome had regularly led the Muses into captivity, but they were changed and withered in foreign air. They had lost some of the virtues of their native land, where indeed their career had not been quite blameless. But

* The following lines from *D'Agincourt*, vol. ii., p. 30, might have served for a motto for this book. He is speaking of mosaic. After some sentences as to its durability : its religious character : its historical importance in consequence : and its having furnished the first models of the Early Renaissance, he goes on :—
 "Si l'histoire de la religion reçoit des arts quelques services, la religion, qui répand aussi sur les arts de nombreux bienfaits, leur est utile particulièrement pour le maintien de leurs traditions et le conservation de leur histoire. On est bientôt convaincu du peu de durée (des ouvrages) que les hommes ont employées à l'embellissement des habitations particulières des plus vastes palais, et même des monuments de leur gloire : presque tout a disparu avec eux de la surface de la terre. Il n'est resté que les monuments consacrés à leurs grandes affections, à ces impressions profondes communes à toutes les peuples ; à la religion enfin."

the Rome of the second century, like the Rome of the later Renaissance, openly dedicated art to pride and luxury ; and the decadence between Pericles and Augustus is as marked as that between Augustus and Constantine, when Christianity was first invested with the power of the state. What Heathen Rome did for art was to contribute her great constructive gifts of the round arch and vault, and the perfect use of brickwork ; and though the engineering side of architecture was so greatly advanced in her hands, sculpture lost its inspirations. Demeter and Theseus in the Elgin room are work of Athens at a time when Athens retained a perturbed belief in gods and heroes, and was trying to realise spiritual nature by the eye, and consequently they have much in common with the highest forms of Teutonic iconolatry. They combine spiritual motive with naturalistic handling, they represent Divinity in man's image, with ignorant worship, and tentative seeking. The Greek could only think of the Spiritual as the Superhuman ; seeing no fairer image of God than man, and being constitutionally inclined to go by what he saw, and to represent for seeing's sake.

Hallam has compared the Greek and Italian Republics in a well known passage in the Italian Chapter of his *Middle Ages*, and a special parallel might be drawn out between Athens in the Pheidian age and Pisa from the time of Niccola to that of Orcagna. Restless activity and enterprise, war and commerce to the eastward, enmity of small kindred states, the life of soldier citizens, ruling dependent cultivators of inferior rank ; maritime daring and trust in the triremes, victory and outburst of national triumph desiring to adorn the city of their love, and first in it the temples of their faith—all this the Greek and Lombard-Etruscan cities had in common. The Etrurian Renaissance returns to Athenian study of nature, in man and the higher animals. The Athenian (taking him and his faith at the best) may have looked through his images to personified powers of nature ; from them to personal Beings interested in him and his life according to right rule of Nature ; thence to one great Justice, or Fate, of Zeus beyond Zeus. This St. Paul implies to the Athenians of a later and fallen day, that the best among their fathers

had done. They themselves had now to accept a new Gospel or Revelation of the Unknown God, for themselves and their children; and the spiritual conditions of its acceptance seem not very different in their case from the difficulties and aids of our own race in the nineteenth century.

But it is time to proceed to some brief account of the Three Arts of ancient Greece, from the Pheidian age downwards. We can go no farther back than the Parthenon, which is, for our purpose, the centre of all architecture and sculpture. What Greece learned from Egypt is for other and more learned works.¹ We are concerned with the decadence of Greek art, from its early climax; with its transfer to Roman hands; and finally into the hands of the Church; to be by her preserved for "Gothic"² students.

¹ See Fergusson's *History of Architecture*, vol. i.

² The word Gothic is, of course, used here under protest. For its derivation from Getic or Gothic, the traditional migrations of Gepidæ, and Eastern and Western Goths, &c., the first chapters of Jornandes *De Rebus Geticis* are sufficient: but their substance is found in Gibbon.

It seems best to add a list of references here to books or parts of books generally accessible. If the reader knows something of Homer, Herodotus, Thucydides, the Tragedians and Aristophanes, Plato and Aristotle, so much the better. He should read Acts xvii. 16—34 in the first instance.

The Age of Pericles. W. W. Lloyd, Esq. Vol. ii., ch. xlviii. to the end. *Socrates and the Socratic Age.* Prof. Zeller. Ch. i. And *Essay on Development of Monotheism among the Greeks.* *Contemporary Review*, 1867 (vol. iv. p. 359).

Ruskin's *Stones of Venice*, vol. i. Introd. and ch. i.; vol. ii. ch. i. ii. Ruskin's *Aratra Pentelici*, Lectures iii. iv.

D'Agincourt (Seroux). *Histoire de l'Art par les Monuments.* Fergusson's *Architecture*, vols. i. iv., and on Greece. Study the illustrations.

Introduction to *Count Rio De l'Art Chrétien.*

Seemann's *Götter und Helden* is a good small handbook of ancient sculpture.

CHAPTER II.

THE PARTHENON.

THE rudimentary idea or arrangement of every place of worship is the same : a sacred spot for the God, and a place of assemblage for his people before him. This Greek temples have in common with Roman, and both with Christian churches. In the first place, Templum is derived from Temenos, and that from τέμνω.¹ It is an augural term ; means a piece of ground cut off and set apart, and does not necessarily imply the existence of a building.² But to some part of such inclosures a special significance will always attach, and convey to the worshippers the idea of a special Presence of God. The more spiritual-minded may feel that the whole world is His, and that He is present everywhere : some such notion is implied by the universal instinct of prayer. But sooner or later some building arises in the place of His Presence, and if it be of any size, it will have a specially sacred place. There will be a Temenos and a Naos, a Templum and a Cella, a Holy and Most Holy House, a Precinct, Nave, Choir, and Sanctuary. It will begin as a small cella ; it will require a porch to wait in ;³

¹ Servius ad Æn. I. 446.

² Luogo aperto e di libera veduta. Facciolati ; *Contemplari* dictum est a templo, i.e., loco qui ab omni parte aspici potest. Festus . . . certo carmine ab augure finitus, notatus consecratusque, &c., &c.

³ Greek temples were wholly or entirely wooden structures in the earliest times. *Pausanias*, v. 20 § 3 : 16-31 ; also, viii. 10-2. The σπηλαια seem properly to have been hollow trees, used as niches wherein to place the image of god or hero. The subject of round temples, or memorial shrines, of which the monument of Lysicrates at Athens is the early and central type, and the Pantheon at Rome the grandest example, seems better deferred till we come to the subject of Roman Art.

so its side walls will be carried forward as antæ, with two supporting pillars between, and a low gable or pediment over—perhaps sculptured. More accommodation is wanted, and it acquires a colonnade—a peristyle—all round, and becomes peripteral, and so forth, to the developed plan of a Greek Temple.

The Parthenon is the central building of classical antiquity, though its power is not so much in magnitude as in strength and beauty. Whatever science Greece may have acquired from Egypt, her own gifts to architecture and sculpture were still greater, and they were quite her own. But the Athenian temple was built on the Egyptian principle of eternal endurance, and nothing but the blind ravages of war could have reduced it to its present condition. After the Hypostyle Hall at Karnak, it stands at the head of Mr. Fergusson's list of ancient buildings in their order of stability, or at least in their comparative proportion of support to area. Its size was moderate for its age, the temples of Juno at Samos and of Jupiter at Agrigentum being nearly three times its area in square feet. But, as our great architect says, it stands in the same category with Karnak or the Pyramids in challenging a quasi-eternity of duration. Its pillars may be said, their inferior height being considered, to be twice as massive as those of the Pantheon at Rome (*Hist. of Architecture*, Introd., p. 17 and 24); and when we look at its ruin, we may think there is much in the trenchant remark, that "the satisfactory architectural effect of a building is nearly in the inverse ratio to the mechanical cleverness displayed in its construction."

There are many excellent photographs which give a sufficiently good idea of the present appearance and commanding site of the central building of classical architecture. Detailed measurements are scarcely necessary here; it is enough to say that the Parthenon is a Doric temple on the summit of the Acropolis at Athens, about 150 feet above the sea; that it is, as architects say, peripteral octostyle, *i.e.* surrounded by columns, with eight of them at each end, and that it is 227 feet in length by 101 feet in breadth on its upper step. It is entirely of Pentelic marble, and 66 feet in height, including a stylobate or platform of four steps. There are forty-six

outer columns, 35 feet high, 6 feet 2 inches diameter at base. Within the peristyle thus formed there are six minor columns in each front, forming a pronaos to the east and a posticus to the west. The house or cella within was divided into two unequal chambers; the Parthenon or abode of the virgin-goddess to the east, and the opisthodomus (used as a public treasury) to the west. The first was 98 feet 6 inches in length, the second 44 feet, and they were 62 feet 6 inches wide. The Parthenon had a double tier of inner columns, perhaps Corinthian, the lower of which measured about 3 feet 6 inches at the base. There were forty large (probably Ionic) columns in the opisthodomus. The great chryselephantine Athenê stood in the eastern chamber, and was 39 feet in height.

The marble sculpture of the building was arranged thus. The metopes or spaces in the frieze outside, between the triglyphs which separated and framed the carvings, were in high relief, suited to the open-air lights; and their subject was the battles of the Centaurs and Lapithæ, and of Athenians and Amazons; with the deeds of Athenê and her favourite heroes, on the east and north sides. The outer frieze of the cella, facing outwards, was adorned in low relief, adapted to diffused lights, with an ideal of a grand Panathenaic procession. It is formed at the west, and proceeds towards the east; the sacred peplos is being presented below the eastern pediment, with other offerings; and the sacred feast is begun. A long pomp of maidens bearing offerings, of bigæ and quadrigæ, of lyres, flutes, and victims, occupies the southern frieze; and the north and part of the west side are filled chiefly by the equestrian procession; which is in motion, and on its way eastward on the long northern frieze, and still forming up its distant rear on the west. Under the inner friezes there is a shallow egg and arrow stringcourse, and there are guttæ below the triglyphs on the outer. On the merits of all the figure sculpture, human and animal, there is no use in dilating here. It can be seen in the British Museum, and it must be seen. All we can say about it is that the whole forms a great unity, and does proceed as a procession; that the individualities

are those of the most beautiful youths or maidens in art ; solemnly draped, and adorned for the service of the goddess, on which all are bent ; that the oxen are grandly natural in their slow pensive movements, and the horses ready to fly out of their skins.¹ They are smaller than nature, but they seem to show the type-form of some Nisæan or Persian breed, in their small hoofs, fine nostrils, broad frontals, and specially clean, flat legs ; and they live through sinew and muscle, bone, tendon, and vein, showing the same sense of circulation and full life below the surface as is observable in the human or heroic sculptures.

Then for the great works of the two pediments. The Eastern must be considered to consist of especially Attic deities, attending on the birth and presentation to Olympus of the maiden Athenê. The Western as certainly represents the contest of Athenê and Poseidon for command of the destinies of Attica. We take Welcker's nomenclature for the order in which the figures were arranged in the former. On the spectator's extreme left and right, close under the pediment, the horses of Helios are just tossing their heads above the surface of the sea, half rearing as they gallop up the steep of day. Those of Selene are just sinking opposite, their settling action given with strange graphic power. Next to the Sunrise is the figure generally known as Theseus.² Next to him were Welcker's Thallo and Auxo (casts in British Museum), (Visconti's Ceres and Proserpine), then Iris, or Oreithyia as Welcker believes. Then with one or more now lost figures, came the great central group, utterly destroyed and unrecorded. Its restoration has exercised many able sculptors and critics. There is the vase-painting theory (Quartremère de Quincy's, and in part Brøndsted's) which supposes a little Minerva issuing from the cloven head of Zeus, with Vulcan and the axe. Millingen inclines to this, but it does not satisfy Welcker, who reasonably thinks it unlikely that the designs of ceramic paintings can have borne

¹ On their biting, and Greek horsemanship, see some excellent remarks in Gen. Whyte-Melville's *Riding Recollections*. Chapter on the Use of the Bridle.

² Welcker calls him Cecrops, Brøndsted says Cephalus or Dionysus : Colonel Leake, Visconti, and Gerhard agree in calling him Heracles. As Theseus was the Attic Hercules, this idea seems to agree with the common nomenclature.

any relation to those of groups in marble. Welcker and Lucas are for a full-sized Athenê standing by her father, and the former refers to a painting in Philostratus (*Imagin.* ii. 27), Παλλάδος γοναί, with Hephæstus and the axe. Mr. Watkiss Lloyd thinks with reason that Athenê must have stood in the centre of her own pediment.

On the spectator's right of the central group, a Victory and Ares are supposed to have stood, the former balancing Oreithya on the left.

Then follows the splendid group of three female figures, called the Fates by Lucas and the majority; or Aglauros, Herse, and Pandrosos, daughters of Cecrops (Welcker); or the Hours, or the Graces—or Vesta, Ceres, and Proserpina, as Colonel Leake says. Under whatever name, these fully-draped statues seem to us, with many persons, to give a more noble and perfect idea of womanhood than any other in existence; excepting perhaps the Venus of Milo, *alias* the Samian Here. No amount of passion suggested or expressed, pure or mixed, can ever make such appeal to what we consider the loftier feelings of art, as these three headless ruins. They are best thought of as Fates: for they have the calm of eternity; and the charis of some future peace, when labour is all done, and evil all undone. The series ends with the down-settling horses of Selene; one head in particular as unmatched in art as Theseus or the Three. It is in its place in the Elgin room.

As to the western pediment, we know something of its central group from the drawings of Carrey for the Marquis De Nointel in 1675, before the siege and explosion of 1687. Its order of sculptures from left to right is thus given by Welcker and Müller.

W.	Ilissus or Cephisus	Hercules and Hebe	Demeter Ares Dionysus Persephone	Victory and Chariot.	Athene and Poseidon	Chariot of Amphitrite and Hippo- campi	Leucothea Melicerta Peitho Dione Aphrodite Eros	The- seus Callir- rhoë
M.		or Cecrops and Herse (still on the temple)	or Pandrosos Erysich- thon Aglauros	or Victory Erichtho- nius		or Thetis Amphitrite	or Diana Latona Apollo Venus Dione Ceres	

And Müller calls the last two figures Halirrhothius and Euryto.

Of these figures, all that has escaped utter destruction is briefly catalogued by Mr. Lucas, in his account of the Parthenon, p. 17. All is in the British Museum: that is to say, the chest and back of Neptune, a fragment of the breast and face of Athenê, the torso of Erechtheus, the Ilissus, and a part of the group of Latona. The fragment of Athenê is determined by Carrey's drawing, as indeed is that of Neptune. The two deities as it were stand up to each other for a moment, as they turn away and mount their chariots; and Mr. Lucas's restoration seems most happy in the way in which it illustrates the radiating unity of all the other figures in the pediment on the central group, like strong petals of a double flower. The flying drapery of Minerva, as combined with her grand stature, gives an idea like that in Homer,¹ of limbs of æther, yet of the immortal weight under which the chariot groaned.

One more remark may be added from Mr. Lloyd, that having the statues on the ground in the British Museum is a great advantage to us moderns, enjoyed only by those of old who had the *entrée* of Pheidias's ergasterion in the brightest days of Athens, for so short a time before the forms were raised to their places in the pediments. The work of their backs is seen now, it was lost before, and *it is just as fully elaborated as the parts in sight*. We now see much of the exquisite finish of the parts which were before invisible; as the laps of the reclining Parcæ.

There is no separating Greek art from Greek religion, because Greek liturgy or religious service consisted in nothing but art. An Athenian of the Periclean age would neither have understood nor endured to be told that the Parthenon pediments meant nothing, or had nothing to do with him or his life and death, in Attica or elsewhere. There is no doubt that the immediate and present glory and influence of Athens were one great object of all these works. Athens sought her own glory, but it was by means of sacrifice to Athenê; and it is not probable that any Athenian of those days thought

¹ Hom. *Il.* x' 829.

literally nothing of Pallas his goddess. Of course we must make an indefinite allowance for mixed motive, as we have to do very frequently in estimating the amount of genuine devotion manifested in Gothic architecture. Professor Ruskin says somewhere that the citizens of Chartres and Rouen built high church towers against each other in much the same spirit in which two English towns would play a cricket match. The same question recurs for Greek or Goth. Was the former consciously deluding himself after all, and spending his talents, mental and metallic, the spoil of his victories and the energies of his soul, on names by which he meant nothing? And if he meant anything by the names he worshipped, what did he mean? And if he did not quite know what he meant, how much importance did he attach to being himself well regarded by That which these names darkly expressed to him?

A certain feeling of awe and interest, amounting to veneration, may be allowed to the Elgin fragments as we see them. Any undergraduate who visits them has before him autograph and holograph records by the right hand of Pheidias. It must certainly have passed all over these sculptures, though they may of course, have been blocked out for him by pupils from his design or model.¹ A great fuss would rightly be made about any autograph of Æschylus, Sophocles, or Euripides; and these too are documents of history. They once occupied the eastern and western pediments of the Parthenon of Athens. What is known of their arrangement, with others now lost, is derived from the drawings made in 1675 for the Marquis de Nointel, by an artist named Carrey.² Sketches of both are given in Professor Welcker's paper in the *Classical Museum*, vol. ii. p. 367, and in Mr. Lucas's *Remarks on the*

¹ Mr. Watts's lectures of 1880 contain interesting suggestions as to work done by contemporaries; as the more archaic parts of the frieze possibly by Myron. We are compelled by want of space to refer the reader to Quatremère de Quincy's *Jupiter Olympien* for much information on Greek material, modelling, and the whole subject of chryselephantine sculpture.

² Welcker's illustration is derived from Stuart's *Antiq. of Athens* (Continuation, vol. iv. ch. 4), which contains an accurate copy of Carrey's drawing, further improved in the *British Museum*, vol. vi. pl. 20. Lucas's model of the Parthenon in the Elgin Room should be studied with his work.

Parthenon (London, 1845). The literature of the subject is summed up, with full references, in Smith's *Dictionary of Antiquities*, but those who will read Welcker, Lucas, and Mr. W. W. Lloyd's second volume, will learn all about these works of art which can be known to students of history only. To know them really one must draw them. And without affectation on this awkward point of technical skill, we may appeal to careful spectators in the Elgin Room, a limited audience, and ask them to look at the rising or sinking horses' heads alone, or else at a single arm or limb. It is possible to see how the folds of the drapery depend on the heroic mould below, and how the mighty muscles suggest, by curve and texture, all the glow of athletic life, of strong circulation in the hard flesh, and fulness of health shown through the bathed and anointed skin. We think that a draughtsman will assert with confidence, and that, generally speaking, non-draughtsmen will have to accept as a fact, the special and unequalled *life* of these statues. It may be expressed, with reference to the Theseus and Ilyssus, that they are stronger down the spine than other male sculpture, and that there is an evident unity of muscular action in them from head to foot. In the group of the Fates (or Brightness, Dew, and All-dew), the *charis* or grace of pose and repose, the unity of rest passing into rhythmic action, all appears to us different from and superior to that of other female forms. It seems that in these forms we know what noble Greek women of high character¹ were like, as Praxiteles afterwards gave the world assurance of the *hetæra* in all her varied characters. Lastly, there appears to have been a unity of action in all the figures in each pediment, certainly otherwise unexampled on such a scale, in which the figures radiate and unfold like petals from the central group, and which adds greatly to the pervading sense of life, and helps to make this marble breathe and live beyond other marble. Mr. Lucas's model calls especial attention to this. It is at once recognised in the western pediment, where the V-shape or inverted triangle between Athenê and Poseidon is its keynote. His restoration of the eastern sculpture does not ignore this rhythmic unity of action, as perhaps Cockerell's, Gerhard's and others do—their

¹ As Gorgo at Sparta, or Elpinice at Athens.

work seems less in accord with the springing limbs and flowing draperies that remain. It looks rather perpendicular and sometimes crowded. All the old figures have perfect elbow-room, and are as free as if the marble pediment were the blue empyrean.

The technical merits of these sculptures will hardly be disputed. At present there is real and practical reason for considering their religious or spiritual import. The question of their bearing on Greek religion concerns us greatly. Many, we trust, still hold the Christian faith implicitly. But it is an everyday necessity for those of us who are engaged in the vital controversies of the time, to give account of how we came by it, and by what temporal means it was handed down to us. At the first step we find that we owe the actual written word, and a very large proportion of traditional and patristic literature, to the language and the logic of Athens, as instrumental or *sine quâ non* causes. The word of God is treasure given from these earthen vessels to us who are of other earth : and far from depreciating ourselves, we may, on the contrary, congratulate ourselves on certain resemblances to the keen and anxiously-inquiring spirits of earlier days.

The Word, said Philo, is twofold,¹ that which sets in order within, and that which sets forth to others without. The one is reasoning, the other language. Our faith comes to us through this interpreter-race, who excelled so in word, inward and outward. We use their language, forms, and methods of thought every day. We reason with their syllogism ; we fall into and out of the fallacies they used, exposed, and analysed ; we are guided in principle by the history of their glory and their shame ; their mental and moral philosophy still helps us to live in the spirit of the full revelation of God which is our privilege ; and, above all, the splendour of their great arts of poetry and sculpture has so commanded the spirits of all educated Christians and heathen, that all have agreed in profitable homage and fruitful admiration. Still, it has not been settled to what province of the soul this admiration belongs. Is it dependent on voluptuous beauty ? The higher Athenian sculpture possesses no beauty to which that title

¹ Λόγος προφορικὸς καὶ ἐνδιδάκτερος.

can be applied. Then what beauty is there to admire in the Elgin marbles? There is a physical beauty which is symbolic of moral perfection, and was intended to be so.

It has been shown by Winckelman and others how closely these two arts, of poetry in words and poetry by symbolism, were connected, through the chorus and all the pomps of the Dionysiac theatre and Panathenaic processions, with their statuesque groupings and solemn ingress. Further, it is here again pointed out by Mr. Lloyd how an instinct for moral beauty grew up thus, to aid men's moral sense, and was for a time effective, until, as men grew faithless to the great moral standard of life, beauty took the place of right, and conduct became a matter of æsthetics.¹ For one or two glorious centuries, Athens and Greece considered beauty as a symbolic guide to something worthier even than itself; but when men proceeded to make it the chief and only object, they found the Erinnyes and other assertors of right were in fact very ugly objects; and turned their backs on right in such an unattractive form. In a word, they pursued pleasure instead of beauty.

Whatever Athenian faith or spirituality was in the Periclean age, it must have had relation to its temple sculpture. Now was the motive of that sculpture æsthetic, or religious, or practical? was its ideal a reality? was it done purely for art's sake, or to beings who, in Athenian creed, could and would help Athens? If Pheidias, not knowing Zeus by open vision, clung to such knowledge as was given him, desiring more, his spiritual position was at least analogous to our own. If his works are allowed to be works of the unknown factor genius, we have to consider what genius is; and no Theist denies she is God's gift to man.

The sculpture and architecture of the Parthenon can hardly be separated from each other as subjects, in a popular treatise like this. Some considerations on the impressiveness of the

¹ *Age of Pericles*, vol. ii. p. 192.—“From the Homeric to the historic age, a constant succession of noble poets took it in turn to vary mythology with such freedom as to preclude its hardening into an authorised comment on ignorant idolatries. They constantly made it a vehicle for an advancing and purer theory of moral obligation. It became peculiarly characteristic of the Hellenic world to rely, in unhesitating faith, on the æsthetically beautiful for guidance into the essentially good and universally true.”

great Agalmata of gold and ivory may follow; but a few more words may be said on the comparative effect of buildings in their decay, and of how Time, which has deprived them of their sculpture, supplies an effect and deep sentiment of his own, which makes us forget the want of it, or that it once was there. We have all of us seen Gothic ruins, and passed under their spell of soft regret; if travel were worth nothing else, it would be invaluable if it only gave us a notion of the ruins of an elder Past. It would add another trial to us who hold the Christian Faith, if all its churches were in ruins; because it would show us that the world had altogether forsaken us. Still those ruins would be important historical monuments; and have a pathos for a Pagan or Agnostic generation in possession of their endowments, which would probably be the deepest feeling of which it would be capable. Such a feeling we all experience at Furness, or Bolton, or Fountains—and we naturally think it peculiar to Gothic ruins, because subtle associations of our own land mingle with it. There the wallflowers smell sweet, and the foxglove clusters dappled bells, and the short turf is full of thyme, or violets such as lean over our own shepherd streams. Gothic ruin is easier to appreciate than Greek: it takes both study and travel, and perhaps a little artistic training, to appreciate the effect of one of the ruins of all Time. He brings low the cloud-capt towers and gorgeous palaces; but there is a confused awe about those which have made the longest stand: and when like the Parthenon they are central buildings of the world, representing wide civilisations, and the great deeds and sufferings of many races, that feeling is redoubled. The glorious sculpture and colour, the frieze of Athenian knighthood, beauty, and sacrifice, the ivory and gold of the towering Agalma, are hardly missed as one sits, a stranger in place and time, among the marble blocks which long defied time not in vain, only to be shattered by brute rage of war. All the immeasurable loss matters not—the great landscape with its world-wide associations, the rich all-embracing light, the tender colours of two thousand years are enough for us. Sculpture we think is necessary to our wild Gothic, not here, in the desolated centre of all sculpture,

not in the temple where all was emblem and image, from the Agalma to the corners of her pedestal. We miss the wall-flower scent, and the tall foxglove ; but here grows the soft acanthus, "gift¹ of the dust of Greece," itself the symbol of immortality, rising from decay among the potsherds of the earth : type of forgotten glory which is not lost before God ; pledge of St. Paul's hope of forgiveness, and yet greater glory for the fathers whose ignorance He winked at. "Yet shall ye be like to the wings of a dove, that is covered with silver wings, and with feathers like gold."

¹ *Stones of Venice*, i. p. 26.

CHAPTER III.

THE EARLY DECADENCE.

PROFESSOR RUSKIN'S mnemonic of Greek art, with a few dates and remarks, may be sufficient to bring us to our true point of departure, which is the Christian era. At that date, Greek sculpture and painting may be considered as naturalised at Rome, and applied, with imperfect success, but the greatest magnificence, to the decoration of a new and most powerful style in architecture.

The mnemonic divides the nine centuries B.C. as follows :—

- A. Archaic art, 9th, 8th, and 7th centuries.
- B. Best „ 6th, 5th, and 4th „
- C. Corrupt „ 3rd, 2nd, and 1st „

The best or perfectly central work is produced in the central age, the fifth century, and may best be remembered by the dates of the great battles of the Persian invasion—490—80—79—66 ; as the preeminence of Attic art begins with the employment of Pheidias in the triumphal reconstruction of Athens. The archaic period is one of steady progress, the corrupt centuries of steady decline. The three coins at p. 112 of *Aratra Pentelici*, are highly graphic examples of characteristics of the three periods ; and the chapter itself deserves careful and repeated study. And we must here begin to recommend a list of actual sculptures, models, and flat pictures or photographs for perusal. It is thought better on the whole to give references only, as the results of woodcut are almost always disappointing in point of accuracy, and good autotype and line engraving are too costly for this book. It is far better that a student should take it with

him to the British Museum ; and there take no more notice of it, than by obeying the injunction to compare the casts of the Æginetan marbles in the gallery next the Elgin room, with the marbles of that name and place. He will see the difference between "archaic" and "best," between progress and culmination. It is not too much to say that every young man who is reading ancient history ought to do this. But those who mean to bring archæology to bear on the study of history should go farther ; and make progress enough in actual drawing to be able to draw a statue, at least, with tolerable correctness as to scale and anatomy. They will have to argue about form, drawing, and expression ; and to judge of the dates of works by their character, that is to say by their drawing and expression. And it will be year by year better understood, that form is not mastered by eye and brain unless it has been followed by eye and hand ; and that it is no use talking about drawing unless you can draw. The critic ought to have at least half the knowledge of the pupil-teacher. It is certain from the experience of teachers, that educated people acquire graphic skill with peculiar facility, whenever they take pains about it on a system ; and this they will find it necessary to do sooner or later.

However, the great *Agalma* of the God or Goddess was of course the central object of a temple. It stood for and expressed his Presence in his chosen place ; and all the other decoration of the building was expressive of his dealings with men, and of their sense of his glory. In these colossal images there was a concession to greatness or bigness of scale, which was afterwards repeated in the vast mosaics or Byzantine apses ; and the comparative smallness of inferior deities, and human creatures is again and again imitated in Venetian sepulchres.¹ But every figure in the Parthenon was dedicated to the worship or the glory of Athene ; and such dedication unquestionably gave a loftiness of aim to the work,

¹ See *Stones of Venice*, vol. iii. p. 78. Tomb of Doge Giovanni Dolfinò, A.D., 1356. Christ enthroned with two angels, half-size : the Doge and Dogressa kneeling before Him, about $\frac{1}{3}$ size of the angels. Lord Lindsay refers this to the smaller statues, borne in hand by some of the great Chryselephantines : as Victory, by the Pheidias Zeus of Olympia.

which nobody doubts to have been connected with the lofty ideal of that Goddess most pure and awful. It was a decadence in aim when a more equivocal deity was represented and honoured with equal skill. The Greek decadence is not in technical power or science, for the fourth century, at least. Those who consider great art to consist chiefly in refinement in technique, will not allow that this was decay at all. Those who think it consists chiefly in powerful execution of lofty ideas will make this concession. Whatever the Praxitelean change was, it was prepared for by the rapid decline in faith, or power of belief in the image. The image became more and more a fetiche to the vulgar and a phantom to the wise. It could not satisfy or convince, or answer the hard questions of philosophy or of life. The ivory Zeus stood for all ; and it was nothing at all, except the Thought of the murdered Pheidias ; and where he was, it could not tell.

The pleasanter forms of nature-worship appealed at once to real and universal passions, and stimulated a wider audience, by means of a different range of artistic subject. The old understood Monotheism, with its fixed standard of right and wrong, its Eumenides and its ultimate judgment, fell out of memory. The old country worship of man's own notion of nature took its place ; and there never was a truer bit of cynicism than the remark in *Lothair*, that nature-worship always ends in an orgie. Aphrodite began, with Praxiteles and the generation for whom he wrought, to prevail over Athene, and to bring in a retinue of her own, who were preferred to amazons and heroic youths ; or to the forms of solemnly-draped sons and daughters of Athens, in their highest and purest mood of adoration. The Dionysia were not so much in harmony with lofty sculpture as the Panathenæa ; simply because Athens drunk was not so purely or tenderly æsthetic as Athens sober. No doubt the Dionysiac theatre, and its statuesque groupings, were connected with sculpture ; but the Euripidean groups were not quite like the old Æschylean, and sculptural form was more ideal than theatrical gesture. Besides, the Panathenæa did not celebrate three days of "Un-bungings" and "Pitchers" and Pots.¹ Aphrodite was not

¹ Πιθολύται, Χόες, and Χυτροί—the three days of the Dionysia.

alien to Dionysus ; and Praxiteles is her great minister, as Pheidias of Athene.

It seems that the agnostic or antireligious views of art which are current, and are asserted to be prevalent at the present day, necessarily, in our view, must degrade it, supposing degradation to be a real and possible thing. This is not, in fact, the case, if there be no standard of morality external to man's judgment ; for if man be the measure of all things, then one man's judgment of what degradation may mean is as good as another's, *i.e.* as worthless. By whatever name men call themselves or their views, they generally come sooner or later to see what they really mean. Our agnostics begin to acknowledge, that knowing nothing of the Christian's God, they stand illogically on Christian morality ; and they try to secrete moral systems of their own, which are no doubt beautiful, but possess no authority whatever, except the author's or authoress's, and perhaps the sanction of the editor of a Review. It seems admitted on all hands, that if Greek religion was all wrong and false, its art inspirations were false ; that is to say, were like idols, nothing at all. If it was all bad, the great thoughts and works which sprung from it, and for a generation were, entirely devoted to it, must have been altogether false, and bad also. It follows also, that if Greek Pantheism or Nature-worship was an organization or a decorative system of gross sensuality, and nothing else at any time—Greek art ministered to sensuality, and to that only, or to beauty as a means to that end. This is the severest view on the religious side. It agrees fully with the atheistic, as to the character of Greek art, only that it protests against its assumed sensuality as sinful, which the other extreme does not. Where these views seem to fail is in their disregard of the chronology of art ; and of the parallel decadence in aim, hope, and aspiration, which Athenian sculpture and history seems to us to display. The fact is, that the religious and irreligious public in this country, as elsewhere, live in about equal inattention to actual relics or trustworthy records of all glyptic art ; and that people have not quite mastered the fact that there are statues and statues, and that the dates of those we possess

range over more than 800 years. It is not realised that during that time men of different morals produced work of different character. One can be enthusiastic or argumentative about any work of art; and any statue will do for polemical purposes now, just as in older (and equally artistic) days, any Torso, from Zeus to Silenus, would do to throw on the heads of one's adversaries in siege or onfall. Count Rio, as a critic, has long been cashiered for Christianity; nevertheless, every draughtsman or competent person will tell you that he is perfectly right in what he says about Heathen decadence; if the expression, and motive, as well as technique, of the Elgin marbles are to be taken into account. They are of gods and heroes, Athene and the Amazons, and the hands which wrought them were heroic as well as artistic. The Praxitelean age leaned towards Aphrodites and athletes, and its work was purely artistic in the highest degree. One or two statues or fragments yet remain, which seem to point to a period of transition, in feeling or execution; and the best known of these may be said to be the Vatican Torso and the Samian Here or Venus of Melos. The latter may yet be said to stand as a type of pure and perfect womanhood, human and something more; woman without token of sin, and as one made a little lower than the angels.

We must banish all symbolic statues and personifications, as Glaucus the sea-god or Triton, and the Arcadian Pan, to the archaic departments as deities, or to the post-Alexandrine decadence, if merely artistic figures. So also incomplete forms like the Hermæ. However they may have been imitated or revived in later sculpture, they have nothing to do with us now; far less than the Æginetan marbles, which are next to our first period of departure, and which should be compared with the Elgin marbles, on the archaic side. The originals are at Munich, but there are good casts in the British Museum and elsewhere. The severe conventional arrangement of hair, and the stereotyped smile of ancient Greek art are preserved, though the figures represent the Æacidæ in fierce conflict. (See *Aratra*, p. 200.) And this is, perhaps, the latest Greek example in our possession of the hieratic or symbolic style of dedicated art; which desired not

too great likeness to the fashion of a man, and reverently and carefully avoided all representation of human passion. It may be said that this is retained through the best period, and that gods and heroes are supposed to be undisfigured or untransformed by excitement, rage of contest, or the human emotions generally. The living model was studied from, but his features idealised into typical form. It was reserved for Giotto and his successors, in their higher hopes for the everyday men and women they saw round them, to call attention to the varying expressions of countenance which betray the play of human feeling, noble or ignoble ; only with constant preference for the former. The Greek idealised the frame and stature to perfection ; the Christian had deeper sympathy with the human heart, and strove (for ever in vain, but with a failure preferable to any other success) to note down records of its wild and changeable beating.

For works of the Praxitelean schools yet in existence, the great group of Niobe and her daughters, now chiefly in the Museum at Florence,¹ stood, in Pliny's time, in one of the temples of Apollo at Rome. It was then uncertain whether it was the work of Scopas or of Praxiteles ; but may be taken as representative of their school. Every museum of ancient sculpture, or of casts from it, will show the student copies enough of Aphrodites, fauns, and athletes. The bust of Lais in the Randolph Gallery at Oxford, seems rightly attributed to Praxiteles' own hand. As Professor Legros once made me observe, the folds or gathers of its tunic are exactly the same at the bosom as those of the "Bella di Titiano" with the mirror, at Berlin. The Discobolus of Myron, in his upright attitude, is the best to study ; the later Apoxyomenos, or strigil-bearer of Lysippus, is a capital athlete ; the Fauns are admirable in their way and beautifully analysed in Hawthorne's *Transformation* ; and the little Apollo or Apollino, called Sauroctonos, is very charming indeed. It seems as if earlier representation of Apollo and Diana had been much interfered with by the awe in which their traditional, archaic, or in fact shapeless idols at Delphi and Ephesus were held. As has been said somewhere else,

¹ The finest of the heads is at Munich, and other parts in other places.

that large number of literary persons who quote Goethe without the context should remember, that his remark about miraculous pictures being generally bad works of art applies to Hellenic image-worship quite as much as to Christian.

There is no doubt that athletic sculpture came down from archaic times with an honourable naturalism of its own, or that it was one of the original sources of portrait sculpture. Myron of Eleutheræ and Polycleitus of Argos both excelled in it, and in close and brilliant study of nature. The latter was thought to have pleased the people best; the former "wrought out" Here, men said; but Pheidias "revealed" ἔδειξε, Zeus. This formula of distinction is quoted in *Aratra Pentelici* (p. 35) from Lucian, and there can be no better. Polycleitus is supposed to have written on sculpture; and to have illustrated his book by the renowned Doryphorus or Spearman, an athletic model of which two probable copies will be found in the British Museum. It reminds one of Leonardo's Trattato, or Albert Dürer's Proportions of the Human Figure. Polycleitus worked chiefly in bronze, and his works have been melted into oboli to pay mercenaries, instead of being burnt into lime to build fortresses.

A steady popular preference for the athletic or commonly-naturalist style, marks the period of time which ended and succeeded the Peloponnesian War. Athens and her citizens were changed indeed from their rejoicing faith in Pallas, their Goddess of Victory: they had fallen from her and been forsaken, and could look for heroic beauty no more. It was time for Praxiteles; and, no doubt, like Euripides, he was better than his time. At all events, if Athens could not reign over Greece, it saved her from many an after destruction to be central academy and museum of Greece; and in making her that, her citizens did their best for her.

Euphranor and Lysippus of Sicyon connect the school of Polycleitus with the Rhodian sculptors, at or after the Alexandrine epoch. Lysippus's choice of athletic subjects did him and his art no dishonour. But the old view of the games, as sacred rites on which the gods looked heedfully, was far out of date by his time. All sculpture alike had been sacred to the service of the gods, and a part of the

decoration of their dwellings. The earlier ἀνδρίαυρες, or statues of athletes, were not matter of private ostentation; they were dedicated in temples, and thought of as effigies of men whom the gods had favoured, who had won in games, where Neptune, it was whispered, had once been seen in bodily form. The wrestlers toiled and strained in honour of their gods; the pancratiast hit straight,¹ in pious duty to Zeus; and when accidents happened, as they continually did, there was sorrow for the sufferers and also for the people: the gods had shown displeasure at their games. All this had died out of mind by the end of the fifth century. Lysippus seems to have made as few attempts at the superhuman as he could help, and to have treated sacred subjects just as Rubens and Vandyck did; that is to say, as well as he could for the sake of his art and his patron, not thinking there was more in it than in any other form of good workmanship.

Alexandrine Age to Roman Transference.

The school of Lysippus, or of Polycleitus, was transferred to Rhodes at the end of the Alexandrine epoch, and showed wonderful vitality in naturalist or athletic representation. It is best to speak of its greater works only; more particularly as they are the most commonly known of all statues in England. Their date and authorship is in almost all cases disputed; nevertheless they may be taken as representative of the best efforts of a very well-instructed and tasteful school of eclectic sculpture. As to the inferior sculpture of Greek decadence, we are not particularly concerned with it, as it separates itself to continually increasing distance from the unconscious spirituality of the Pheidian work, and is as far from it, finally, as from the rude Christian efforts of the first or of the thirteenth century. The early Church knew nothing of the Arts, except that they were bound to the service of idolatry and immorality. She began with humble, almost beautiless, symbolisms; though she often borrowed forms of domestic decoration, when free from idolatrous meaning, and made them sacred emblems of her own.

The works and names generally connected with this third

. ¹ Pindar, Ol. vii. 27.

period are well known. The warrior of Agasias, called the Fighting Gladiator, is probably the noblest; and in the opinion of many critics the Dying Gladiator, or Gaul, ranks with it.¹ Both seem beyond the range of Roman or Græco-Roman skill, even in the Augustan age. The Laocoon is also referred to this period, and attributed to Agesander, Apollodorus, and Athendorus of Rhodes.² Casts of these works belong to every museum. They are frequently accompanied by another male statue, somewhat deficient in life, but of yet greater purity and beauty of form, the original of which is still in the Louvre. It is called the Nude Germanicus, and has been supposed to represent Hermes pleading, and to be of Roman subject or origin. However, the name of KAEOMENEC, which is engraved on it, seems to refer it to the younger sculptor of that name, who flourished at Athens, with Glycon and others, shortly before the destruction of Corinth by Mummius. Glycon is the reputed author of the Farnese Hercules, and the elder Cleomenes of the Venus de Medici, a somewhat unsatisfactory copy of that of Cnidus by Praxiteles; to which it stands in the same relation as the Antiope of Correggio to the Venus of Titian. The one represents beauty for its own sake; the other, beauty for the sake of grosser associations.

These statues, with the Apollo Belvedere, and others above mentioned, of the Praxitelian epoch, form the modern English ideal of sculpture; and it is somewhat to be regretted that a country which possesses full three-fourths of the existing relics of the Parthenon sculptures, should suffer the popular attention to be withdrawn from them. It is impossible to

¹ He is considered as a Gaul of the time of Eumenes of Pergamus, who overcame the Galatian-Celtic immigrants of Asia Minor.

² It is in dispute whether the sculptor of the Laocoon had read the 2nd book of the *Æneid*, or Virgil had seen the group of the Laocoon. It is a typical work (at least as to its central figure) in respect of academic skill, refined execution, and degraded motive and expression. Seeman says (*Götter und Heroen*, p. 348) that the right arm has been wrongly restored, and should not be struggling with the snake, but grasping the back of the head in agony. This, with the open mouth, seems to destroy Lessing's hypothesis, that the hero is only sighing, and not vociferating. But that great critic's remarks on the relations of painting and poetry are none the less valuable on that account. Discovered 1506, near the Baths of Titus, and now in the Vatican.

hope for success in any expostulation with the public taste for sculpture, chiefly because no such really public or popular taste exists. Nevertheless, the Elgin marbles—that is to say, the metopes of the Parthenon, the frieze of its cella, and various colossal figures from its pediments, are in the British Museum. With them are the marble reliefs of the temple Nike Apteros, later than Pheidias, but full of the spirit of his school. Further, there are good casts from the external and internal sculpture of the Temple of Theseus; and finally the remaining originals of the Phigalean marbles, in part repetitions of the works of the Attic temples, though by younger hands. If these models be not sufficient to guide the studies of a great school of glyptic art, no others ever can create one in England. But climate and associations must for ever tell heavily against one. The physical and moral atmosphere of Rome and Florence are full of the arts of the past, and till both cities are finally and completely vulgarised (which good work is proceeding with great rapidity) it will be easier to most men to work at painting or sculpture in either, than in London or in England. Harmless pleasures of eye and ear, the sight of mountains and falling waters, the simple and sincere delights of sunset and sunrise over sky unpolluted and land undefiled; the company of men devoted honourably and avowedly to art, not ashamed of their work; the daily sight of great relics of the past, which really prove the possibility of history and the reality of ancient days;—these aids, or most of them, are necessary to the historical artist's life, unless he be indeed of the sons of giants. And those who, like Blake, Turner, or Holman Hunt, prevail against all opposition and over all difficulty, suffer nevertheless in their victory, and produce not what they would have done, but what their fate permits them.

The works of Pheidias are in London, however, and it is better for the student to labour at them daily than to wander from athlete to Faun, and from Nymph to Aphrodite, or run through miles of second-rate sculpture. It is not that the later works are not most beautiful; but he will learn most by going to the achievements of the great master, without whom they would not have been what they are.

We cannot define Purity here: we cannot tell the public what we mean by Breadth: nobody is agreed as to the meaning of the word Life. Action, Harmony, Repose, Sincerity, *εὐρυθμία*, *χάρις*, are simple ideas, and undefinable. Superiority in respect of some of these qualities distinguishes the Pheidian sculpture from other works; but full understanding or appreciation of them can hardly be learnt without accurate drawing, which we earnestly commend to our readers. For the draughtsman, successful or unsuccessful, at least sees a statue fully and thoroughly, and to a degree of which the unpractical critic never has or can have any idea, till he himself becomes a draughtsman.

The wonderful vitality and fertility of all the Greek schools of art will be noticed hereafter in our chapter on Rome. Professor Mahaffy says it is a fact which he thinks will never be explained; but his own account of the leisure of Greek life seems to throw much light on it. However, Roman art is an expression which can only be used under protest, and with explanation; since even down to the middle ages Rome was rather the patroness and great central gallery of Italy, than the seat of an actual and living school of art; and even now her attractions to the artist are chiefly historical and social; though one must add those of cheap, pleasant living, freedom or laxity of conduct, appreciating society, frequency of patrons, and the easy way to what is called an European reputation.

But the vitality of Greek art is the living principle of all art. It means, in fact, delighted study of the work of gods known or unknown. In spite of sensuous frailties, sometimes more in the eye of the gazer than in the mind of the sculptor, the Greek was capable of seeing fair form and colour with delight for many a century of national dependence or servitude. The Roman was too great a plunderer to be a workman or scholar. It was easier to "import" sculpture and paintings than to learn to produce them oneself. Very much the same phenomenon is observable in the practical American view of literature, which can hardly get remunerated in New York, because it is obtainable by every mail from London on gratuitous terms.

One further explanation or justification may end these remarks on epochs of Greek sculpture. It was necessary to call attention to the religious origin and motives of all early Greek sculpture, because the impression has been spread abroad that it is essentially immoral and anti-theistic. But though from the earliest days to the present Art has ministered to Religion, there is no doubt that modern times have separated them, or that Art has fallen from her reasonable service. The Christian Faith can indeed do without her; and no doubt many good Christians think it ought to be so. Puritan religion is perfectly unquestionable, and where it predominates the highest work of art certainly never appears. What we assert is, that in ancient Greece and elsewhere, men's aspirations concerning their gods inspired their highest attempts in art: that instincts, methods, and traditions of architecture, sculpture, and painting passed from Greece, through Rome and Byzantium, to the Christian Church: that Christian men for many centuries have cared greatly for artistic expression or symbolism of spiritual things; that many of the greatest works of Italy and the North have been produced accordingly: that such production will always be attempted till the spiritual aspirations of a race are extinct: and that then Art will fall back on material or sensual impulses, and so perish, or sustain a change which will render her, in our view, a bad thing and not a good one. Further, we wish to illustrate the connection of Greek and Gothic art not only by historical succession, or inheritance of models and technique, but by the great principle of study from nature, and faithfulness to concrete Beauty as found and observed in all things in their places in God's creation. As the Books of His Will for us have come to us through Greek language of letters, so the study of His Book of Nature has been delivered to us through Greek language of symbol. For the Greek, having only the book of Nature open to him, read therein so faithfully, that in many respects he is still apt to teach the Christian artist to study Nature after him.

CHAPTER IV.

PAINTING.

THE beginning of *Aratra Pentelici* contains one of the best classifications of the three arts with which I am acquainted, as far as that can be done by giving the broadest yet most accurate account of what we really mean by the words architecture, sculpture, and painting. We have simply three divisions of art—one, that of giving colours to substance; another, that of giving form to substance, without question of resistance to force; the third, that of giving such form or position to substance as will make it best capable of such resistance. There is painting on canvas, and on china, and on house walls; there is sculpture of carving, and hammering, and chiselling, and casting; there is architecture or building up of palaces, ploughshares, big and little guns, and the lofty rhyme—the latter to resist criticism and Time. Milton's use of the word build shows how he extended its range over all processes of construction, or even composition; and I have heard his mute and inglorious countrymen talk excusably of "building" a pudding or a pair of boots. Then, whenever you reduce a shapeless mass of matter to a shape, that is sculpture; whenever you dispose colours in permanent relation on or in a solid substance,¹ you are painting, and much more to the same excellent purpose: particularly the two important observations (1) that, generally speaking, painting and sculpture are imitative and architecture merely useful; and (2) that sculpture and painting, as imitative operations, form in part

¹ Glass or tapestry.

between them one graphic art (graphic or representative ; as graphic applied to writing only means vividly indicative).

Our view begins from the earlier Pheidian period, that is to say from that great change and ripening of Greek character which was accomplished by the Persian wars. If a list of archaic painters is wanted, it may be added in our appendix. We learn from Ælian, if we have the courage to consult *Varia Historia*, viii. 8, that Cimon of Cleonæ, about Solon's time, was the first great (or well-paid) professional painter ; and that in the time of Polygnotus of Thasos (A.D. 430—460 and later) a great advance was made by his famous works at Athens and at Delphi. (The hasty reader is here implored not to mix up Polygnotus with Polycletus, or Cimon of Cleonæ, the painter, with Cimon of Athens, the Admiral, a century after him, who was Polygnotus's great friend and patron ; a confusion which long existed in the mind of the present writer.) All that is to be said about the origin and processes of Greek painting is much as follows. Painting and sculpture always go together, and are one graphic art. As soon as they attract attention, and are considered worth having, they are taken into the service of the gods ; but they begin as ornament, as soon as men get anything to adorn. Hunters scratch outlines of reindeer on ribs ; fishermen carve paddles, or the bows of their canoes, for the sake of something to do, in hours of somewhat savage leisure. Then they think their patterns may look prettier with red ochre rubbed into them, and so they do rub it in. Maidens, whose lovers must leave them a while, do skiagraphs, or silhouette outlines of the young gentlemen's shadows on walls : their fathers cut away the wall within the lines, and take casts in clay. Then they are pretty sure to paint them red, or black and red : then they draw round them, and make flat outlines : then they begin, with a few different materials, to fill up the flat outlines with outline-features, and make the great step of using red on red or black on red in different shades : these pictures are called monochromes, and not skiagraphs. This is the step to chiaroscuro or light and shade :¹ and cinnabar, or vermilion, or red lead, and

¹ Quintilian's expression, xi. 3 § 46, is " Singulis pinxerunt coloribus, alia tamen altiora, alia reductioniora fecerunt."

afterwards rubrica, or red-ochre, were the materials. There are four ancient monochromes in the Museo Borbonico at Naples, figured in *Le Antichità d'Ercolano*, vol. i., plates 1, 2, 3, 4.

So begins a native school of art, in Greece or anywhere else; but as one race learns from another, and takes possession of previous discovery as a matter of course, such progress is not often traceable from the beginning. The Greeks no doubt learnt something of fine surface bas-relief from Egypt; and with it much use of colour, on sculpture and on the flat. They certainly tinted, or brought colour into, bas-reliefs and statues. They tinted the Panathenaic procession in the Parthenon; that was, or at its height it told as, painting accented by projection or sculpture. Afterwards they made beautiful little coloured statuettes, at Tanagra and elsewhere; that was sculpture accented by painting. The thing was to get relief or projection into painting on the flat, in different colours. It was easy to step from monochrome to flat polychrome; and the further steps of combining varied colour with light and shade; of getting the right light and shade in each hue, and the reflected lights which vary both shade and colour, are the property of the Hellenic race. Outline in polychrome without much light and shade, they had endless and very noble examples of, in Egypt. Such instruction may have been conveyed through the Ionian and Carian auxiliaries of Psammetichus, early in the sixth century B.C. But Xoana or archaic images of the gods must have been painted long before, and the great combinations of the effect of sculpture and flat painting which go to make a grand historical painting, seem to begin from the works of Polygnotus.

With him painting was advanced to the service of the gods, and to the work of national record and commemoration, kept always in the temples of the gods. He painted the tale of Troy in the Lesche, or public portico of Delphi; people thought his draperies beautiful; and his Cassandra blushed delightfully.¹ He also painted in the Temple of Theseus at

¹ For the Lesche at Delphi, there is a most interesting article, with illustrations worth even more than verbal description, by the editor of the *Classical Museum*.—Vol. i., Parker, 1851.

Athens, and took his share in the panel paintings against the long wall of the Stoa Pœcile, or Painted Colonnade, in the same city; also at Plataea and Thespiæ. He and Micon may have worked with Panænus on the renowned Battle of Marathon in the Pœcile.

And as we have before indulged in comparisons between the Greek cities of the Peloponnesian War and the Municipia of Northern Italy, in their Christian-mediæval form and period, and so far brought Greek and Goth or Northman together, we may go on to attempt some kind of parallelism between the Campo Santo of Pisa and the Pœcile of Athens. They have likeness enough as galleries of great works of native painters, and Polygnotus, Micon, and Panænus may stand over against Giotto, Orcagna, and Benozzo Gozzoli. By what we know of their execution, Polygnotus, in his latest time, must have been something like Orcagna, more like Giotto in his earliest. He was of the old Homeric type of ancient painting, as men said in Pliny's time, and painted with sacred or historical motive, or not at all. He represents, as Mr. Wornum says, the *essential* style of painting: his subjects are gods and heroes, like Pheidias's; he represents the first of Mr. Wornum's three æras of Greek painting, those of development, of establishment, and of refinement—say B.C. 600—400—340.

The sketches of Progress and Decadence in *Epochs of Painting* coincide fully with Professor Ruskin's views, expressed in *Aratra Pentelici* and elsewhere. Greek and Gothic art have both alike their periods of spiritual and lofty aim, of naturalism and realism, and of lost aim and materialism. Distinctions between religious and moral art, and art describable by the corresponding negatives, are no modern pietism, but as old as the critics of Pheidias and his successors. Polygnotus is the painter of morals or character, ἀγαθὸς ἠθογράφος.² He may have been nearer the central school of Florence in his power of drawing, and I believe Mr. Wornum says he is related to the Alexandrine artists as Botticelli to the Caracci at Bologna. Panænus, the nephew of Pheidias,

¹ For the Cnidian, he paints in the Lesche the fall of Troy, the preparations for return, and the visit of Ulysses to the Shades.

² Aristotle, Poet. vi.

is compared to Holbein for keenness of observation and record. But as it is certain that Polygnotus composed his pictures without perspective, or elaborate or natural grouping—only in parallel lines, the nearer at bottom, and the more distant at top, I should think it better to compare his work with those Italian pictures which still display some considerable archaism. Much is said about the architectural balance of his compositions, with equal numbers on each side; perhaps with likeness or analogy to the works of Giotto at Assisi. The great work of the Pœcile was certainly the Battle of Marathon; a rather curious instance of a perfectly historical combat with many mythic episodes of its own, believed by contemporaries and actors in the very event. The hero Echelus had appeared, quelling the Persian ranks with his ploughshare; a hostile shadow had been among the Athenians, all covered with its shadowy beard, slaying and striking blind; and Epizelus of Athens, who saw it fell his right-hand man, never saw on earth again. Pan had appeared to Phidippides the runner. Phœbus Apollo had defended his own Delphi in person, and sent storm and earthquake, ruin and madness, on the Medæ. Demaratus the Spartan had told of his vision in the Thriasian plain, how the wonted revel of Dionysus went from Athens to Eleusis at its time, though Athens was in ashes and Eleusis and all the land under the Persian spoiler. Neither man nor woman was left to wait upon the god; but the dust-cloud of his procession set forward all the same, with the cry of the mystic Iacchus; and turned aside “to brood above the masts of Salamis.” All this was certainly believed by men who had fought at Salamis; that is to say, they repeated the tale to each other, and it seemed likely enough, not a thing to be questioned, but cheerfully accepted, by men employed in making history instead of analysing it, and in doing great deeds rather than investigating their own mental operations. Such belief was a part of their triumph. God had certainly, and beyond all manner of doubt, been with Athens; and no Athenian could for the life of him see any absurdity in his having been present in the shape of Echelus or under the veil of a cloud of dust.

The Romans of the earliest Republic, in the same century, were scarcely, in fact, idolaters,¹ and had not so ready or varied a belief as the Greeks in the local mythology of woods and rivers. But they had heard their Sylvan cry from the wood that Rome had won by a single death, and were glad to think the twin sons of Leda had fought before the ranks of Rome at Regillus. Theirs was not the faith of honest doubt, now so much preferred ; but of honest occupation in other work than doubt. One cannot deny the cogency of Lord Macaulay's parallel of the appearance of St. James on a gray horse at the head of the array of Cortez ; and he remarks that the age in which that (lie, I am afraid, is his expression)² was printed, was one of printing-presses, libraries, universities, scholars, logicians, jurists, and statesmen. "But worthy Bernal Diaz," he says, "who wrote an account of the expedition, believed in the appearance against his own senses. He says that he was in the battle, and that he saw a gray horse with a man on his back ; but that the man was, to his thinking, Francesco de Morla, and not Santiago. 'Nevertheless,' Bernal adds, 'it may be that the person on the gray horse was the glorious apostle Saint James, and that I, sinner that I am, was unworthy to see him.' " Bernal Diaz probably knew of a church organisation called the Inquisition, and its censorship of sceptical historians ; but in his time such a narrative seriously related in print, not by him in the first instance, but by a chaplain of Cortez, seems to have had an element of falsehood, or of recklessness of truth, about it, which cannot be imputed to either Greek or Roman warriors. Heathen miracles were not, in fact, made evidences of religion, or applied to prove dogma ; they were thought rather likely things, but they followed from the Greek pantheism of nature. If there were divine beings all about, they would probably do superhuman things ; and people who saw them would wonder, *i.e.* call what they saw miraculous or wonderful. Bernal Diaz was in error, or illogical, in believing in an anthropomorphic possibility of saints returned to the body ; but if such beings are allowed to exist and come on earth,

¹ Varro, *apud* St. Augustine, *De Civ. Dei*, iv. c. 31.

² In *Lays of Ancient Rome*, p. 89, ed. 1847.

there is no wonder at their bestriding gray horses and dealing dry blows.

We are not told what Cortez thought of the appearance of Santiago, nor if Pericles said anything about the phantoms of Marathon or Salamis. He probably quoted Homer, and reflected how Peisistratus had brought the beautiful and gigantic Phya with him dressed and armed like Athene, on one of his re-entrances into the Acropolis.¹ But it was as natural to those who believed, or delighted in imagining these wonders, to represent them in the temples, as to fifth century Christians to do the early Old Testament mosaics of Santa Maria Maggiore at Rome, or of S. Vitale at Ravenna in the next century. History repeats itself, because the same great human impulses are principles of action in all ages. History never repeats itself without change, for those principles work on different men and under different circumstances. What the Egyptian painters did, the Greek of Athens and the Greek of Byzantium and the Roman of the age of Alaric and the Lombard of the age of Dante all did, after their fashion. They wrote upon their walls the things they thought best worth telling, in the strongest narrative language they knew, in sharp form and pure colour. Egyptian work had gone before on the same road. It had been chiefly record of conquest, in bas-relief with colour or without, and in colour relieved or unrelieved. It had represented its gods as present among the labours and the strife of men. Still its only object had been pure record ; it was not always in swift progress of skill, beauty, and interest, like the Greek ; it had not the emotional attempt at beauty in religious expression which the Christians made for centuries, and at last with such great results, after they had learnt the lessons of earlier ages. It had its own sublimity and beauty, but was sternly limited by conventional aim and rule. It never sought artistic beauty for its own sake. "All Egyptian pictures," says Mr. Wornum, "appear to be simple records, social, superstitious, or political ; Egyptian painting was more a symbolic writing than a liberal art—in a word, a coloured hieroglyph. Perhaps the traditional pictures of judgment, and

¹ Hdt. i. 60.

the symbolic (not really represented) presence of their gods may be considered work of higher aim ; but at all events the standard of technique was unfairly and hopelessly kept down." See Pliny's *Hist. Nat.* xxxv. 5-15. See also Rawlinson's *Herodotus*, vol. ii. p. 292, to the following effect :—" Painters and sculptors were forbidden to introduce any change or innovation whatever into the practice of their respective arts, or in any way to add to them. The practice of Egyptian artists was thus uniform from generation to generation. We learn also from Synesius that it was considered a necessary system that painting and sculpture should not be practised by illiterate people, lest they should attempt anything contrary to the established order of sacred things, among which the representations of the gods were certainly of the first importance." However, as various animals were specially symbolic of deity, it may be supposed that great skill and force of character would be attained in the outline-drawing of such creatures ; since practically nothing more than outline was allowed ;¹ and accordingly Egyptian outline is often powerful in the extreme, "A man would be likely to draw a hawk or an ibis well, who believed that God was in the hawk or the ibis."

How strange it seems that both in painting and sculpture the work of Egypt should remain in greater perfection at so far greater an age than that of Greece. It was a technical necessity that the imperishable granites and porphyries (as we shall see hereafter) should be cut into conventional and changeless and therefore almost imperishable forms ; and they remain in unquestioned order, while the marble of Phidias is in piteous fragments, and the work of Polygnotus is lost, and conjecturally compared to that of all Florentines from Cimabue to Sandro Botticelli.

At all events, about B.C. 400, and partly, it may be, with Panæus, a time of more sculpturesque power in painting began, with more vigorous projection by means of greater refinement of light and shade. I prefer to speak of refinement rather than force in Greek chiaroscuro, because we

¹ Wornum, p. 39, and personal observation of birds in the Heliopolitan obelisk and in the Desert of Sinai, at Wady Magharah.

moderns associate the idea of force in light and shade with a Rembrandtesque style totally alien from all Greek principles of temple-decoration. But towards the end of the fifth century B.C. correct and vigorous drawing seems to have taken the place of that flatness and low relief which had hitherto existed in decorative painting. It must be remembered that at this time all painting was decorative, adapted to special and pre-ordained places in public buildings, and which the architecture really determined ; and that power of shade and projection of form may have been sacrificed to decorative purpose. Great pictures were all public property, adapted to great buildings. The remark made above, as to shallow bas-relief being suitable to indoor or diffused lights, may apply to powerful chiaroscuro in painting. Certainly no early Greek painter would have thought of deceptive action, or ultra-naturalism to impose on the senses, in the decorations of a temple. The time for burying important works in private galleries had not arrived, nor had the professed collector made his portentous appearance between Peiræus and Mars' Hill. And as pictures were valued not only in relation to their subjects (though, from the choice of grand motives, one can see that went first), but viewed also primarily as pieces of colour-decoration, subordinate to general effect of colour, it is probable that their hues were kept always light in tone, or at least on a very even scale of light and shade. Polygnotus and Panæus appear to have made no attempts at illusion or at projecting their figures out of their frames, rightly preferring that their pictures should look like pictures, and their heroes continue in their proper places on the walls.

Apollodorus of Athens (born about 460) was, according to Plutarch, the inventor of tone, or the first great master of light and shade ; who observed and recorded reflected lights, and also the reflections of colour which they involve, since light always partakes in some slight degree of the hues of the object from which it is returned. Previous painters had gradated simply by diminishing light or adding shade ; Apollodorus changed and gradated the colour also with the shadow. Hence his shadows had a truth and power of representation which, as Philemon Holland's *Pliny* says,

"brought the pencill into especial credit." He gained the name of *σκιαγράφος*, and Mr. Wornum compares him to the great Dutch master of light and shade ; but the picture to be seen at Pergamus in Pliny's day, which represented Ajax lit up and all on flame with a flash of lightning, indicates a different choice of subject from the usual inspirations of Rembrandt van Ryn.

The names of Zeuxis and Parrhasius and Timanthes are also representative of the fully developed art of Greek painting. The former, born probably at Heraclea, in Macedonia, not later than 450, seems to have followed closely on Apollodorus, and with even greater success, as the latter complained that Zeuxis had robbed him of his art. Zeuxis is one of the most celebrated painters of antiquity, and in the midst of his great works there appear to have occurred certain signs of perfected realism, gradually losing its lofty aim and drawing towards sensualism. These are analogous to the materialist progress of Greek sculpture and to the degeneracy of artistic feeling in the later Renaissance, and both are marked by the eager and continued study of the nude female form. It is the same with Praxiteles, with Zeuxis, and with Cellini ; sooner or later, in such men, and with such men, technical skill reaches the point at which, in Cellini's words, the object of all art is to represent a naked man and woman properly. The story of Zeuxis' composition from all the maidens of Agrigentum is an example of this ; perhaps as a representative master of *drawing* he may be compared to Botticelli or to Rafael, but more particularly to the latter, from his scientific-sensuous pursuit of the nude. Still he by no means relinquished the higher subjects of mythology, though his personal view of them may have been very different from that of Pheidias. His treatment of mythology was like Titian's of sacred subject. He was the first and greatest of court painters, working for royal and popular patrons, but on terms of great independence, as his wealth was so great that he ceased to sell his pictures and presented them to kings and peoples, one in particular to Archelaus, king of Macedon.

Another characteristic of Zeuxis's works is mentioned by Lucian (Zeuxis, iii.), his originality in choice of

subject. He avoided, says the ingenious dialogist, such vulgar or hackneyed subjects as gods, heroes, or battles, and always selected something new and unattempted; then follows a description of the far-famed *Centauress*, of which he saw a copy at Athens, the original having been lost at sea on its way to Rome, whither it had been sent by Sulla. The line which Zeuxis and Apollodorus were accustomed to write upon their pictures may apply fairly to both; as to many great men and their critics in after days:—

μωμήσεται τις μᾶλλον ἢ μμήσεται.

Parrhasius is said to have been Zeuxis's equal, or in some sense his superior. His great power of line is specially dwelt on, and there is much concerning his delicacy of flesh-tint and finish. As he painted pictures of a somewhat abominable description, one in particular, which afterwards adorned the bedchamber of Tiberius, his works may be thought to have preceded those of Zeuxis in the favour of that emperor and his contemporaries, for that reason.

Timanthes's name will probably be for ever remembered by his ingenuity, or ingenuousness, in veiling his Agamemnon in the *Sacrifice of Iphigenia*. "The ancients," says Mr. Wornum, "have all given the incident their unqualified approbation, but its propriety has been questioned by several modern critics, especially by Falconet and Sir Joshua Reynolds. Fuseli, however, in an elaborate and excellent critique has probably settled the matter in favour of the painter." For ever, we trust, for the sake of all parties.

Eupompus of Sicyon is the last very distinguished painter of this period. From Pliny's anecdote of him, a powerful individuality and open eye for natural character and beauty seem to have been his strong points, and his powers extended over sculpture as well as painting. He is said to have told the young Lysippus, who asked him whom he should choose as his model, to look abroad on the crowd he saw about them, and make nature his model, not an artist. The very same advice has been given or followed by good artists through all the intervening time, and may be summed

up in the Slade Professor's advice in *The Two Paths*, not only to copy Rafael, but to study Nature as Rafael studied her.

The names of Apelles, Pamphilus of Amphipolis, Protogenes, Nicomachus, and Aristides, Pausias of Sicyon, Nicias of Athens, Euphranes, Athenion, and Theon, are chief in the Alexandrine period of painting (say 340-300); which corresponds, with strict analogy of motive and object, to the seventeenth century schools of the Italian Renaissance. It seems as if the best periods of the Florentine Roman school stood in the same relation to the Bolognese and late Venetian (after Veronese) as Apollodorus, or perhaps Zeuxis, to Apelles, though the latter probably possessed much of the power of Veronese. It is singular that we should have testimony so decided as Aristotle's (Poet. vi., *supra*) on Polygnotus's power of character, and gratifying to find so great a thinker thus giving evidence in favour of high thought. At all events, the development of decay of Greek painting, as of sculpture, is parallel with the progress, good or evil, of Greek character. Beginning with aspiration and great achievement, it ends with ingenuity, the endless multiplication of ordinary works, and the production of very extraordinary ones. Having dictated not arts only but law to Rome, the Greek becomes her pedagogue, scholiast, artistic minister of luxury, and worse. Yet for all that, while art exists, he is its master, and in process of time Greek hands, in their extreme of weakness, were once more strengthened by the Christian Faith, to show Teutonic students the way their untrained strength could not tread; to the ancient study of Beauty in nature, to the glory of the Lord of nature.

The dismal title of *πορνογράφος* seems to have been earned by Parrhasius, first of the great painters, but it was applied also to Aristides, Pausanias, and others. That this kind of painting should have been a regular branch of art is not to be wondered at in the Ptolemæan period or that of the Roman conquest of Corinth; but the frequent practice of such work, and that by great men, shows an exact parallelism of decline between the Greek and modern schools. The falling off is not at first in technicalities;¹ they rather advance, for

¹ Wornum, p. 109.

they monopolise the attention of the artist : it is the spirit of art which departs. Men cannot long be creative or poetic about bodily passion, because it only repeats itself, and palls by law of nature. The inspiration of art is the spring of art, and sooner or later men of honour and spiritual feeling become aware that art is pursuing the worthless. They then declare art itself worthless. Such was the Puritan feeling, which first displayed itself among ourselves on a grand scale when Cromwell dispersed the collections of Charles I. It had appeared before in Italy, in Savonarola's holocausts of vanities at Florence, when many pictures were consumed, as we are informed, and probably few much regretted. Similar causes, physical and spiritual, produce similar effects in different ages and places. The names of Apelles and Protogenes, however, are not included in the dreary list of painters of shame. Both doubtless represented the nude, but they may have prevailed over its temptations and dangers by glow of colour, as Giorgione; or by force of overmastering and refining beauty, like Titian; or may have risen above them in a chariot of fire, like Tintoret. They are not named as men who gave place to the devil in low or foul intent. Pliny makes Apelles his representative painter. The *χάρις*, or grace, of his works seems to imply perfect execution and exact evenness of finish as well as skill in working out detail; and he knew when to leave off. "For Apelles, beholding wistly upon a time," says Philemon Holland for Pliny, "a peece of work of Protogenes his doing, wherein hee saw there was infinite paines taken, admiring also the exceeding curiositie of the man in each point beyond all measure, hee confessed and said, That Protogenes in everything els had done as well as he himselfe could have done, yea, and better too. But in one thing he surpassed Protogenes, for that he [P.] could not skill of laying worke out of his hand, when it was finished well ynough; a memorable admonition, teaching us all, That double diligence and overmuch curiositie doth hurt otherwhiles."

The anecdote of the contest of lines between Apelles and Protogenes reminds us of Rafael's present to Dürer, "showing his hand;" and of the latter's display of his skill in drawing a lock of hair for Bellini or indeed of Giotto's O. (a circle drawn with the brush to show his skill). That

of the grapes and curtain, of Protogenes' painting of the foam, and of the cobbler whose advice Apelles followed on shoes, but rejected on legs, with the Greek equivalent of the proverbial, *Ne sutor ultra crepidam*, are not very important artistic traditions ; but Apelles' purchase of Protogenes' neglected works for fifty talents, to show the Rhodians the high value he attached to his rival's pictures, places his character in the happiest light. His great success in portrait and the fact of his being Alexander's favourite have perhaps contributed in some degree to his primacy among painters ; but our list of Greek workmen need be carried no further. We have said something of the first rise and fall of art, in sculpture and painting : at first in a certain reasonable subordination to architecture : then independently of it. The progress of architecture, from beauty to power, is best seen in Rome ; as Roman additions and modifications had so much to do with it. The fall of Rome transfers the seeds and germs of art to the keeping of the Christian Church for the benefit of the Teutonic races. A few further notes of resemblance between the spirit and consequent progress of Greek, and Lombard, or Northern art may be added here, and may perhaps be found suggestive as to comparison of life and habits, between the great artistic periods and races and our own.

In the first place, every building erected for beauty or for solemn purpose, or public assemblage, was considered incomplete, by Greek or Lombard, Norman, and German, unless it were adorned, and adorned all over, with sculptures and painting suitable to its architecture, and designed in accordance with that, and therefore with the purpose of the building. It is the custom to set Greek against Gothic, and split the architectural profession into two opposed camps, neither of whom are presumed able to understand the other. Greek may be right, and Gothic may be right, but they cannot be right together in the same place. Our own notion is that they may be right at the same time, but not in the same place or climate, or even material : that Greek can hardly ever be right in England, a land of freestone, bricks, and constant rain, and that Gothic never can be fit for Greece, where there is unlimited marble and sunshine. But it has come about from the popular determination that Greek and Gothic shall

never have the same beauties, that the beauty of the Parthenon is popularly believed to have consisted wholly in its proportions. Its vast number of statues, bas-reliefs, and paintings, are almost ignored. To the mind of Pheidias, as to that of Pisani or Giotto, it seemed desirable to have a good building first, of fine material, and such masses and proportions as the spirit of wisdom within them ordered; and then to ornament it all over, inside and outside, with such historic or symbolical forms and colours as should make the building speak for itself about its intention, and the dwellers in it, and the work to be done in it, and how it came into existence. The superiority of the Greek consisted in that powerful hold of the prevailing and guiding lines and broad masses which enabled him invariably to keep his ornament in the proper place and quantity; and this seems to have been founded on congenital and subtle perfections of eye-organisation which were his gift. It was also derived from the continual cultivation of his technical judgment by observation of nature; especially of the highest and grandest objects in nature: the clouds, the seas, the mountains, the ox, dog, and horse. And, chiefly, every Greek knew the points of the man, who is lord of all here, and sometimes seems a little lower than the angels to us; as to Greeks he seemed but just below his dead fathers, now heroes, or the nearer elemental powers. But though their developments are so various, still the arts of the best Hellenes, and the best barbarians, involve their greatest resemblances. The wonder is that men so far divided in all material and spiritual circumstances should have worked on the same principles, and with such similar results. Goth and Greek equally sought the glory of God and the dead who were with him; colour and marble had the same qualities to both, to both a right angle contained ninety degrees. The Christian faith, as illustrated at Pisa in the Campo Santo, is connected with the history of an Eastern race far removed from Lombards or Northmen; that history is all-important to Christians, and it is duly painted by Benozzo Gozzoli; and on the other side Orcagna sets forth hopes and terrors after death. Having no definite information beyond death, the old Greek filled his sacred places with historic pictures of deaths most honourable

and blessed, as men had met them at Marathon ; and if the Pœcile had taught Athens nothing else, it would still have repeated in her children's ears the stern Lindsay's apostrophe : " Lord, what stout hearts men may bear : God send me and mine as brave an ending."

Dicæarchus was a highly competent person about the time of Aristotle, and he wrote a book called the *Life of Greece*, in which he gives an account of the history, geography, and moral condition of the various states. He says of Athens that the first impression the city made on strangers who entered her for the first time was simply bad and disagreeable, and that they often thought there was some mistake, and Athens could not be Athens. Afterwards, they found out that it was all right, and that Athens was what they had expected in beauty ; in certain well-chosen and appointed places. The streets were extremely narrow, and seldom paved, and very ill kept ; there was no sanitary system, or water supply as in Rome ; the private houses commonly presented a mere curtain wall to the road, being built of clay or bricks, whitewashed over. " In early times," says Becker (*Charicles ; The Grecian House*, p. 257), " when a private citizen passed most of his time amid the grandeur of the public edifices, his own abode was simple enough. Athenian residences at the time of the Peloponnesian War were certainly neither large nor stately structures. According to Thucyd. ii. 14, the Athenians preferred living on their estates in the country to residing in the city, and hence the country houses were even superior to those in the town.¹ It was not till the Macedonian æra, when public spirit had gradually decayed, and private persons, *not satisfied with participating in the grandeur of the state*, became desirous of emulating it at home, that the private buildings became more sumptuous and magnificent, while public structures were proportionably neglected."²

The words of Horace as to the worthies of ancient Rome applied equally to those of Athens in her great time,

¹ Isocr. Areop. 20, p. 203 : καλλίους κ. πολυτελεστέρας.

² Demosth. *Olynth.*, iii. p. 36 : ἔνιοι δὲ τὰς ἰδίας οἰκίας τῶν δημοσίων οἰκοδομημάτων σεμνοτέρας εἶσι κατεσκευασμένοι. ὅσῳ δὲ τὰ τῆς πόλεως ἐλάττω γέγονε, τοσούτῳ τὰ τούτων ἤδυνται. Also in *Aristocr.* p. 689, where he says that Cimon and Pericles would have been astonished at the luxury of his own day.

"Privatus illis census erat brevis, Commune magnum." It is painful to dwell on, in our own day, the public spirit, the social desire of honour and beauty, and the absolute civic brotherhood which must have been felt, for the time, by the men who planned or who paid for and enjoyed the great public works of ancient Athens. They were not patrons of art, but true lovers of it. They did not think it desirable to live apart in palaces, but to share, as friends, the splendour and glory of their own state as they partook of the air and sunshine of the Acropolis. As friends they walked in the presence of their gods. They had no great private galleries to be mausolea for great pictures. It is true that, when they began to build rich houses for themselves, they understood that they would be uninteresting without sculpture, and decorated them accordingly ; but in their best time they seem to have been content if the works of their chief sculptors and painters were always visible for all, and a common delight to all, in temples and public places. Theirs was the artist's view of art, ours is that of the collector and the dealer, regarding not the picture, but its price.

The domestic habits on which we congratulate ourselves are in part the necessary result of hard climate and hard work, and are doubtless no subject of blame or complaint. But the word domestic involves the idea of economy, or careful and somewhat frugal arrangements. The expression "domestic" luxury appears to be a contradiction in terms, and the state of things to which it applies seems disastrous, at least to the sciences of imagination. Private luxury appears to transfer the interest of life and art to small things, not shared with others ; to selfish pleasure and low aim. It was of course easier in the climate of Athens, when books were not, or were few, and life was transacted *vivâ voce*, and face to face, for a man to pass day after day in enjoyment of the highest pleasures of sight in the public buildings, where he met and faced friends and opponents. There, the great national collection of the greatest works of beauty ever known was continually before the eyes of the whole race ; and there existed accordingly a national standard or judgment about beauty as a real thing, attainable on certain principles if you were faithful to them.

Here art is party and trade, like all else ; men buy and hoard this or that painter's works, and extol him, and abuse others, to give value to their purchases. Great art is scarce in England, because England cares for nothing but money and party. Athens cared greatly for the latter, doubtless, but considerably less for the former ; also she desired beauty as good money's worth : as a great co-ordinate object of life. The Gothic mind, Italian or Northern, seems to have resembled the Athenian in this matter more than the modern. In Torcello and the maiden Venice, or in Pisa or Florence, or in Rouen, or Nuremberg or Augsburg, in after days, one principle always prevailed, that whatever splendour or beauty there might be attainable should be given to public buildings first, and to the churches pre-eminently. The decoration of private houses might be rich, fanciful, and intellectual ; but it was not to cost so much in money or labour or thought as that which belonged to the state or the city. The only people who lived in private magnificence seem to have been the Jews, who had nothing in common with the state. And there can be no doubt that the domestic Gothic of the early middle ages, though essentially the same style as that of the public buildings of the same date, brings out another characteristic of the style, its adaptability, humility, and handiness.

The domestic Gothic has the humour, the quaintness, the shifts, and contrivances of daily life. The workman jokes and laughs in his grotesques, no doubt, both in Normandy and Germany, and sometimes carries them into church. But in the earlier and more religious ages, "the Gothic laughter" belongs to daily life and to its haunts in a more natural way ; and the real object of church ornament is understood to be the inculcation of the Faith. Unclean jests at unclean monks there may have been, and that in many churches ; or counter-mockeries of Luther, after the Reformation. But the central temple and place of justice were the chief affair of every citizen, and citizens built them, on the whole, with much gravity and zealous feeling for grandeur rather than for jest. They built emulously against each other, no doubt ; but they did attain to real self-sacrifice for the splendour of the state.

And here it may be inquired, in a speculative manner, what sum might be raised yearly for churches and hospitals if all able-bodied persons gave up one wine only, as champagne, and collected the approximate expenses of that liquid only, or would literally give their champagne to the convalescent wards?

Many worthy scholars tell us we have much to learn from the spearmen of Marathon and oarsmen of Salamis. Few of us are likely to dispute the fact for a moment. Could they further tell us how we are to take it to heart? Or is the dismal reflection true that the darker lessons of history are never taken to heart?—that the decadent nation cannot face or trace the causes of decay like its own, in other times?—and that similar degradation must for ever follow on similar temptations, cycle by cycle, and race after race? So indeed it seems, and a mournful prospect seems to lie before us, to students of art, history, or religion. But in all ages, and everywhere, Christians, beyond others, have quoted Solon's maxim in their hearts, and looked in their own sense to death, before which no man can be counted happy. For man is a world in himself; and though he be like Jeremiah, or Phocion, or Savonarola, alone and hated among the crumbling glory of his people, yet his life, the life of the soul, may be given him for a prey. In no place or time is the Faith false, or love or honour over, or God's hand shortened, or His servant and our sister, the Death of the Body, delayed for ever from her office. "Thereafter as it may be."

It seems made out, thus far, that the spiritual motives and uses of Greek art in its best days are closely analogous to its dedicated functions in the early Renaissance, and that there is a parallel decline from such functions. Also it is clear that a technical art-discipleship of Goth to Greek was established by Niccola Pisano, and has continued ever since. But in Roman and Christian architecture and ornament, the actual steps of transition may be traced, by which the Greek temple with its graphic ornament passed into the Roman basilica and the Gothic cathedral, with theirs; and to Rome we have recourse accordingly.

PART II.—ROMAN.

CHAPTER I.

GREEK ART AT ROME.

THE transference of the arts from Greece to Rome is a subject on which many books might be written, but it can only be treated here in its connection with modern history and with ourselves. For Rome not only received both the constructive and decorative sciences, but preserved and transmitted them in turn to the Teutonic races; so that our own art instruction, and no small share of its inspiration, is derived from Athens, and every student must begin with her great exemplaria, and, as Horace says of the sister art of poetry, work at them night and day, so as never to forget them or their spirit. They are the sacred documents of the modern artist, craftsman, or worker in beauty.

The effort after beauty makes the difference between a craft and an art, or between a merely technic art and a fine art. This distinction is virtually the same as that between the constructive and decorative sides of architecture; and it is set forth in theory by Professor Ruskin, in words already quoted. It turns on the use we like to make of the word beauty, and may be thwarted and made nugatory if we please. Ingenuity or complication or simplicity of contrivance may be called beautiful, and has been distinguished as Dædal beauty, or excellence of craft or construction. In architecture, the

beauties of constructive genius are so closely connected with the decorations of the construction, that it is not advisable for popular historians of art to attempt to work out elaborate distinctions. These things are always joined together in the great examples of the world, and need not be put asunder, if they could be. The metopes of the Parthenon are extremely beautiful decoration, but the construction of the temple determines their size, number, and distance from each other, and all is right. The very word architecture, as used by Mr. Fergusson, in his history of the science, vol. i. Introd., p. 13, and woodcut ii., connects the ideas of constructive and decorative beauty in a practically indissoluble way. Mere building is bad building; the thought which should be applied to give additional strength to the most prosaic and commonplace building would greatly improve its appearance, as his illustration shows at a few glances, by progressive steps. The same thing is proved with elaborate, yet simple beauty of language and illustration, in vol. i. of the *Stones of Venice*, which is to be recommended especially to all students of art, chiefly because nearly all masters thereof know it already. Strength of construction, that is to say the utmost degree of strength attainable with the materials, amounts to beauty in buildings, as in the limbs and frames of men. Genuine materials of standard goodness, a well-understood purpose, and honest ingenuity in working sincerely for it, superinduce a certain high degree of beauty before decoration proper begins; and, practically speaking, in architecture they prepare the way and determine the place, &c., of the decoration. If architecture then be building *plus* beauty, all good building is architectural.

Nevertheless it is both true and highly convenient for us to assert, that as Rome herself developed the chief beauties of Construction for modern times, so all decoration best worth having either comes to us from Greece, or has been developed by study of nature on Hellenic (or human) principles. What and how much Greece learned from Egypt is not our affair at present; we have got all through Greece or from her, and architecture in many respects, and sculpture and painting almost entirely, seem to have been developed

from the rudiment by Greek minds and hands. Our previous chapters have brought us to a point in the parallel decadence of Greek morals or manhood, and Greek skill and power, which may be called a point of fracture or crash. The strain of Roman war is put on Greece, and she gives way: yet charms her fell conqueror, and obtains a world-wide influence in exchange for her liberty. It is true that the conquest of Greece by Rome does not of itself prove the degeneracy of Greece from the time of Pericles;¹ but no one denies that degeneracy after all; and if the men of Cynoscephalæ had been the men of Salamis, the course of history would have been very different. A vast quantity of those documents carved, painted, and written, which had resulted from and been the crown of Greek civilisation, were transferred, with vast results, to Rome in the time of Cæmilius, Paulus, and Mummius; and that transference continued, often amounting to systematic plunder.

As has been so often observed, there was at Rome, throughout the period of the Greek wars,² a native or Etruscan school of art, that is to say of the three arts; and as far as painting and sculpture were concerned it came to an end, to speak as briefly as possible, under the effects of Greek competition. The few native artists were overpowered by the vast number of imported models of great merit; the great patrons and "cultured" generals, like all the Æmilian family, were all on the side of the stranger, and encouraged their countrymen to follow Greek examples: the Roman-Etruscan naturalism, of which one great typical example yet remains, could be pursued no longer. Works of great merit certainly existed, and may have continued to be produced in Etruria. I think Sir C. Eastlake somewhere tells us that Etruscan bronzes were much valued even in Athens during the Augustan age. But their type is the group of the Capitoline Wolf and Twins, belonging to the period of the Second Punic War. It is one of the most ancient and

¹ See Liddell's *History of Rome*, vol. i. p. 115.

² Say from 214 to 146 B.C., Cynoscephalic, 197. Metellus and Mummius triumphed for Corinth not long after Scipio for the destruction of Carthage. Polybius came from the ruins of the African city to the ruins of the Isthmus.

momentously-interesting works in the city.¹ There seem to have been two bronze she-wolves and twins: one, mentioned by Dionysius at the Temple of Romulus; the other by Cicero, as gilded and struck by lightning.² The existing group evidently has undergone both trials, there are marks of lightning about the hind legs, and indications of gilding. Virgil certainly saw the same wolf, if not the same twins. It is a powerful and noble group; the heavy jaws and mastiff jowls are grand, natural, and ideally carnivorous; the look of comfort and maternal happiness in the face is still more remarkable, and the great strength of the limbs, with their loose-jointed expression, suggestive of the long lupine gallop, make it a work of the high Natural Ideal. The conventional curls of hair on the neck and shoulders remind one much of Greek archaic sculpture, as in the Apollo of Thera, and the various examples given in *Aratra Pentelici*; but this group confessedly belongs to Etrurian Rome.

However, all the inventive power of Rome was called off to the engineering side of architecture all over the world. Their patronage withdrew art further than ever from its early Greek study of Nature in all her forms; and it gradually lost life, though portraiture long sustained it. Technically speaking, with Græco-Roman or "Classical" Art so-called begins a fatal severance of decoration from construction, lamented by Mr. Freeman, Professor Ruskin, Mr. Fergusson, and last, with great vigour, by Professor Poynter.³ It is in full effect, as the latter observes, at the present time; we follow the Romans with no more intelligence than they followed the Greeks, and plaster our architecture with incongruous ornament to the destruction of its real effect, when very often it is by no means bad in itself. But the first and

¹ Murray's *Handbook* (Rome—the Capitol), and Sir J. Hobhouse's note to *Childe Harold* (Appendix to Canto iv. No. xxv.) tell us all that is known about it.

² In his poem *De Consulatu*, lib. ii.; *De Div* ii. 20; *In Cat.* iii. 8. "He too was struck by lightning, Romulus, who built this our city; the gilded Romulus, whom ye remember to have been (placed) in the Capitol, a small and suckling child, yet pulling at the wolf's udder." "The statue of Natta, as well as the images of gods and the forms of Romulus and Remus, with the wild beast their nurse, fell lightning-stricken." Copy at South Kensington.

³ *Times*, October 16, 1876; Social Science Association Report.

chief reason that the Romans had no sculpture of their own is that they were never students or worshippers of the Graven Image. For good and evil, they were never such idolaters as the Greeks. With ancient Athens art was dedicated to the glory of God in some sense; and at Rome it had no such sanction or inspiration.

What strange questions drearily recur to us about progress in anything—in human happiness or learning, or any of the ways of men! Art and civilisation are migratory, and their advance is local and shifting, sometimes illusory. One rather important meditation will certainly occur to any speculative person who visits the Elgin Gallery at the British Museum. He will wonder what is meant by the progress of the human race—how far and in what sense any collective advance can be made by mankind towards what he will consider the greater goods of life. If enjoyment of pure beauty be any good at all, the world has receded since the fifth century B.C. Those who made, and delighted in, these great documents of humanity were very much better off than those who never go near them. The history of art is by no means a record of progress. If it were so, the study of Greek models would be simple antiquarianism, chiefly useful to the historian as a mere register of names and dates. But the great works of the fifth century B.C. are still our models, and the principles and rules of modern schools stand on generalisations from them. Pheidias is in the same sense a living authority as Faraday. The Parthenon, as a building in its place and for its original purposes, is the central building of the world. There is no male statue in the world equal to the Theseus and the Ilyssus, or the fragmentary Torso; there is no grandeur of female form like Herse and Drosos, no combination of nobility and loveliness like the Venus of Milo. As far as progress of art goes, it has nothing to do with time. Pheidias carved the Theseus, and all the rest of the ages have knocked off its nose. Two thousand years of progressive civilisation have reduced the Neptune and Athene, in whom the eye-adoring Greeks desired to see their Unknown Strength and Wisdom, to lime-dust; which may now be occupied in the same humble career

of usefulness as the clay of imperial Cæsar. Only the flying drapery of the goddess, as it yet swings with her triumphant step, remains to recall to the painter-scholar the idea of her limbs of æther, yet of her weight of divine might, under which the chariot groaned.¹ Only the memorable care and public spirit of a forgotten French nobleman and draughtsman give us evidence of how the fragments in our possession were arranged in the temple pediments. To this day every person who has learnt to draw, or even really to know what a man or a woman or a horse is like, must stand rebuked, as it were, before the awful unconscious and pathetic beauty of the Pheidian relics; and progress can be made on such works only by a coming race as yet unannounced.

But whatever we may think of a sculpture of the future, it is pretty clear that sculpture was little more to the Romans than it is to us. Mummius cared no more about it than Nelson, and plundered it like Soult: triumphs and trophies were all he thought of at or after the taking of Corinth: he and his countrymen seem to have had little or no religious association with the arts. It is necessary to consider the remarkable statement of Plutarch, that the Romans, before the time of the first Tarquin, had no images of their gods; and that of Pliny, that all such objects were made by Etruscan artists for long after that period.² They are highly probable, since the true or earlier Latin religion was undoubtedly sepulchral and domestic, a worship of the hearth-fire and the Lares, or departed sires who had successively been its priests. The nature of this ancestral worship, its distinctions from the more national or cosmopolite services of the temples, and the transitions by which one passed into the other are amply described in M. de Coulange's *Cité Antique*.³ Its relation

¹ See Hom. *Il.* E'. 829.

² *Hist. Nat.* xxxiv. 16; xxx. 45.

³ Translated by the Rev. T. C. Barker, of Christ Church, Oxford. London: Parker, 337, Strand. For Plutarch's statement see in Num. 88 (and ver. I. p. 258 Reiske), *ἐν ἑκατὸν ἑβδομήκοντα τ. πρώτοις ἔτεσι νόους μὲν οἰκοδομοῦμενοι, ἀγαλμα δ' οὐδὲν ἑμμορφον ποιοῦμενοι διετέλουν*. Comp. Clem. Alex. *Stromata* I. xv. *οὐτε γραπτὸν οὐτε πλαστὸν εἶδος θεοῦ*, and the well-known and angry protest to the same purpose in Tertullian, *De Idolatria*. Dionysius Halicarnassus gives a contrary account of a worship instituted by Romulus (*Antiq. Rom.* ii. 18, p. 272, Reiske), with *ξόανων ἰδρύσεις, μορφάς τε αὐτῶν κ. σύμβολα*. But his statements

to Christian worship in the catacombs in after days is a separate subject of great interest, involving the connection of the Cella Memorizæ with the chapels of saints and martyrs, and that of the memorial banquet with the Agape. But the Latin view of divine worship, founded on domestic priesthood and the continued existence of the dead, was altogether distinct from Greek iconolatry, or personification of the powers of Nature. In this, it seems, the Greek and the Latin branches of the Aryan race were for a time divided. The Greek made to himself signs, *signa*, or statues of his gods, in his own image; and the Latin father was priest of the symbolic Fire which represented the life of his race before God. This may account in great measure for the careless irreverence of Mummius and others in the first instance, even when the true splendour of the graven image was brought before their eyes.

The Roman had never peopled the woods and rivers with a fair mythology of his own fancy. He did not think much of an Olympus of personified powers of Nature or Divine Attributes. He thought there were such beings, but his real business was with Diespiter of the Capitol and his own Lares. Whatever feeling he had of Divine Presence depended on human sense of duty, of justice, home-truth, discipline, and daring. He thought God was with him by his hearth; not specially or supernaturally in the presence of Nature, whom he treated rather masterfully, and ordered his own way. The Sylvan and Camena are heard in the days of the Kings; but "the legion's ordered line," or rather column, must have traversed the Apennines pretty often without expecting either deity to volunteer an observation from the wayside forests. Dryads were not looked for in the oaks of Germany or Britain, and Curius Dentatus turned Velino over the rocks of Narni without much attention to the wishes of the nymphs or the river-god. Now, these fancies haunted the Greek continually and delightfully. The root of his idolatry was in an imaginative pantheism, which might be are worthless, and Plutarch is confirmed by the testimony of Varro (*apud* S. Augustine, *De Civ. Dei*, iv. 31). Clement's Philonic view is that Numa was a Pythagorean, who had been instructed in the law of Moses (*ἐκ τῶν Μωυσέως ἀφελήθεις*). Varro's evidence has been accepted by Winckelman, with certain exceptions (*Storia dell' Arti*, viii. c. 4, § 13, seq., t. iii. p. 163, seq.).

thought venial and beautiful, had it advanced towards spiritual conception of the Personal Unity, instead of dying away into general disbelief of God's presence anywhere. But for a time he saw these fair fancies within his head; and what his inner eye saw, his hand could and would set forth; and hence, for good and evil, he has always been the image or symbol-maker of the world. We hear that the Roman pontiffs interfered to protect the shrines and statues of Greek gods for a time; but the Roman had no real reverence for either. Home-worship and lay-priesthood seem to have been yet strong in the Republic of Rome in the second century B.C. They were strength to the State, because they sanctioned an irrefragable and searching discipline, based on the highest natural instincts, and thus taught all men to obey and command. But they seem to have resulted in a kind of cynical puritanism in honest Mummius and other consuls. What were these images, *agalmata*, things for the delight or rejoicing of gods and men? The gods might like them quite as well in the Forum, or Mars without the wall, as on Mars' Hill at Athens: there was no doubt who had got the best war-god of the two. *Victrix causa Diis placuit*; and the breathing-stones and many-coloured tablets belonged to conquered gods after all. So they adorned the great triumphs of many a mile; and it is strictly accurate to say that, in consequence, the only ideas of architectural ornament which a Roman ever had, of his own mind, were connected with the triumph and the trophy. He would carve what he had seen—the captive shield, and spear, and coat of mail hung idly on the wall, or his long files of doomed prisoners led by the disciplined banditti of the earth. And the best builders of the later ages ornamented their triumphal arches in the same way; with plundered bas-reliefs and unconnected fragments of decoration, stolen in idea if not bodily. Mummius was shocked and alarmed in after days, to find he had really done the gods an injury by plundering their temples, and dedicated a bronze Jupiter in the Altis of Olympia by way of sin-offering.¹ But in the first instance he must have thought of such a population of deities much as Cromwell thought of a hagiology of saints on a rood-screen.

¹ Pausanias, *Eliac.* i. n. v. c. 24.

They had not done much good to their worshippers : in fact, Corinthian men and women, and their captive deities, were mutually discreditable. The soldier cared for neither. He saw a great deal of graceful immorality, and his race as yet respected their wives and the household altar. There were nymphs and athletes ; but those muscles had not done much in the day of battle, and those nymphs were not like mothers of the brave.

Non his juvenus orta parentibus
 Infeci æquor sanguine Punico * * *
 Sed rusticorum mascula militum
 Proles, Sabellis docta ligonibus
 Versare glebas, et severæ
 Matris ad arbitrium recisos
 Portare fustes * * * * *

So he let his legionaries play out their game of dice on the Dionysius of Aristides, it being on panel, and as good a board as another. He told his shipmen they would have to find new Apollos if the old ones were lost overboard ; and burnt the Greek Lupanar to the glory of the original Lupa, She-wolf of Rome. Romans used art for pride and pleasure only, and their best employment of it was in portraiture of those whom they loved. Perhaps it is so with ourselves ; but we have no small share, besides, of the Hellenic love of external nature. Greeks may have enjoyed her more domestic aspects ; and our own taste may be more inclined to the mountain gloom or glory. But still we have deep interest, like them, in the beauty of nature. It is connected in our minds with what we call the Hand and Mind of God ; with the Creative Power ; and the Reason, which formed things with relation to man's life on earth, and made things beautiful for a sign to man of Himself. Our pursuit of art then has a sacredness, involves a hope and aspiration, of which Rome knew nothing.

However, an ancestral religion like hers gives a genuine, if a lower, direction to art, because it calls for representation of human ancestry, rather than for personifications of deity through human beauty. But a religion of the eagles is only favourable to the "collection" of works of art, and by no means to their production, or indeed preservation. The Romans collected, but did not much care for them. A

historical eye will note the curious resemblance there is between want of taste in ancient Rome and in modern England. In both it seems connected with genuine and excusable suspicions. But the accumulation of such things in a vast predatory metropolis has often led to their destruction, and the plunder of Rome was mostly destroyed with Rome. Professor F. W. Newman has shown how all the civilisation and knowledge of the earlier world was concentrated in Nineveh by means of merciless conquest, and, as a consequence, destroyed by the hatred of the surrounding populations, which fell on the sculptured records of their conquerors with a vengeful zeal of obliteration, when their own day came. Mr. Parker gives us some account (in an appendix by the late Mr. J. Hemans¹) of the recent disinterment of sculpture accidentally preserved under heaps of Roman ruin ; but for centuries the real destiny of great statues seemed to be either burning to lime by Goths, or being thrown from battlements on the heads of Goths.² All seemed to perish with the Eternal City, except certain indestructible secrets and achievements of form and colour, which died down to their roots in Italy, just survived in Constantinople, revived for a few years with Theodoric, were adopted, in strange ways, by Western monks, even to Ireland and England, and finally rose into sudden but long-enduring splendour with the Tuscan Lombards.

The great constructive gifts of Rome to architecture, and the influence of the grandeur of her ruins on such "Goths" as Brunelleschi and Michael Angelo, connect that branch of art with the Renaissance of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. They, too, are characterised by the separation of sculpture from architecture, the abolition of intelligent ornament, and senseless worship of mere scale and unmeaning luxury, which mark the digression of Roman architecture from Greek. But Niccola Pisano's adoption of Attic models connected Greek sculpture with the Italian and all other Gothic. Greek painting and sculpture maintained an existence all along, though at last by germ and seed alone. One

¹ *Antiquities of Rome*, vol. iii.

² We are to be congratulated on the lately-discovered *Hermes*.

branch at least was always alive, up to the Pisan Renaissance. Sculpture faints and dies by the seventh century ; then mosaic takes its place ; that too sinks in Italy, but maintains an existence in Constantinople ; and meanwhile miniature has never failed in the monasteries, and sculpture begins a strange barbaric revival in Lombardy. But in the feeblest period of the Greek race their religious art again commands reverent attention, from whatever remnant of mankind may be capable of reverence at this day, when ignorance writes for ignorance, and Muggins is the measure of all things. Christian writers as well as anti-Christian have their reasons for comparing the work of early Attica, done with vague spiritual purpose, with the first religious efforts of Neo-Greek monks, to whom the Christian faith alone gave some faint power in weakness. This is common to both, that both were done to a God, unknown or revealed. One was to decrease with its perishing faith, the other to grow for ever with the imperishable. However, Roman decorative art must mean painting or sculpture done by Greeks or in Greek schools for Roman patrons ; while in Roman architecture we come to great national modifications and additions in the science of building, which begin the transition from the horizontal lines of the Parthenon to the vertical "aspirations" of Gothic architecture. It cannot be said that Rome first debased Greek painting ; for the rhyphotographs and pornographs had done it sufficiently without her, throughout Greece and Asia. But she carried constructive science to a height of grandeur which forced her architecture on all her subject or imitative nations, and finally on her conquerors. Athens could not have built a Parthenon without Pentelicus near at hand ; but the omnipresent brickwork of the Empire, the dome and arch, the road and aqueduct, the cloacæ and sepulchres, the walls and towers of defence—all these commanded the attention of subjects and strangers everywhere, and, whether they would or not, dictated ways of civilised life as well as of scientific construction. They ministered to the splendour, and therefore to the influence, of Rome, and became, as it were, her robe of state before her people ; but they instructed them as well. Suetonius' account of the baths, basilicæ, and porticos of Britain is a stock

example of the extent to which the mechanics of architecture were taught and learned ; and the history of mediæval building begins, and almost continues and ends, in the lessons of Rome. They are first learnt from Greece ; they are studied apart by Christian and Northern pupils, who adopt and retain, forget or modify, according to the needs of their climate, their own changing humour or fancy, and the constructive habits learnt from wooden architecture.

The insignificance of Roman temples during the Republic, as compared with secular buildings, is duly noted by Mr. Fergusson in the *History of Architecture*.¹ The only temple which remains at all worthy of such a capital is the Pantheon ; and the Pantheon is the greatest example in the world of the round type of building derived as a construction from ancient Etruria, but generally ornamented (according to Roman habit) with a Greek peristyle. In spite of their unlikeness, it may be connected in our minds with the Temples of Vesta, by the Tiber, and at Tivoli. The Pantheon is, in fact, the round temple, vaulted over for warmth, and with its columns inclosed with a wall, *more Romano*. There can be no doubt that the small circular peristyle is the rudiment of the great dome, as the Attic oblong peristyle is of the Roman, and now of the Christian basilica. The round heathen temple, it will be remembered from Lord Lindsay and Messrs. Fergusson or Freeman, is represented in Christian building by the circular baptisteries of Italy, as at Pisa, and those of St. John at Florence and Ravenna.

But it is time to attempt a short sketch of what Rome really did transmit from Greece to the Church of Christ in architecture.

The greatest Greek models were all temples, and the needs of the temple were unlike those of a place of secular business, however dignified and momentous.² The cella of a Greek shrine was simply the special place of the god's presence. It might be a hollow tree or narrow cavern ; and its size was immaterial. It was a shrine or *sekos* only. Nor was it absolutely

¹ Page 305, vol. i., 2nd ed. 1874. Even the Pantheon may have been a bath ; and the round temple at Tivoli may have been dedicated to Hercules and not Vesta.

² *Ibid.*, i. p. 297.

necessary to provide accommodation for large crowds of worshippers, as the great meetings in honour of the gods were held as feasts chiefly in the Dionysiac theatres or the Altisgroves or racecourses of Corinth and Elis. The Romans borrowed the idea of the circular or oblong peristyle, with its outer temenos or templum and inner sanctuary or cella ; but they almost invariably added to the size of the latter. Indeed, the idea of the most holy place (sometimes represented by a special rite and an altar)—a sanctuary or chancel for special ministry,—and a larger space, afterwards called *navis*, for ordinary worshippers, runs, with various nomenclature, through all human ritual. The leading features by which we can describe the transition from Greek to Roman, and therefore to Christian building (speaking in general terms) may be these which follow :—(1) the appearance and modification of the basilica ; (2) the introduction of the arch and vault, and consequent breaking-up of the horizontal architecture ; (3) the change described by Mr. Fergusson as the transfer of the chief effect of the building from the outside to the inside, from the Greek peristylar impression to that of a Christian interior.

Let us first say a few words on the change from the three true Greek orders to the five Latin. The Doric fared ill in Roman hands, the Ionic worse ; nothing more could be done in either form, and it was only left to degrade both by base uses and over-florid ornament. But the Corinthian order had not, in the second century B.C., been worked out as a style, or treated with all the richness and splendour it was well capable of bearing ; and this was certainly added to it at Rome with very considerable success. An excellent woodcut of a capital and entablature from the Temple of Jupiter Stator in Fergusson (vol. i. p. 300) will illustrate and confirm the author's remark that, though nothing can surpass the elegance and grace with which the Greeks adorned the Corinthian order, "the new capital never acquired with them that fulness and strength so requisite to render it an appropriate architectural ornament." He further adds that this was probably done by Greek artists acting under direction. We are happy to be able to quote Mr. Fergusson's authority¹ for the decay

¹ Illustrated to ocular demonstration in the *History of Architecture*.

of the Doric order as applied to secular uses, after its religious employment in the Parthenon, for example. We are continually told that art has nothing to do with religion or morality, meaning that modern artists personally decline the connection. Very well ; this is our great architect's observation on the "infinite" inferiority of the Roman secular Doric to the Greek monumental or religious :—"It would be most unfair to institute a comparison between a mere utilitarian prop used only in civil buildings" (no Roman Doric temple is in existence), "and an order which the most refined artists in the world spent all their ingenuity in rendering the most perfect, because it was devoted to the highest religious purpose." Compare his other observations on the grandeur obtained by the redundancy of strength and splendid stability in the Parthenon. The fact is, that that building was erected in a spirit of rejoicing sacrifice of all that was noblest in Athens to the patron-goddess who had glorified Athens ; and that in very truth the spirit of self-dedication or discipline was united with the fullest Greek sense of beauty in its builders. There can be no doubt that dedication of one's richest property and highest mental effort to the service of God, unknown and felt after, is of the nature of self-sacrifice, asceticism, or discipline. The rudiment of this Hebraic and un-Hellenic virtue is certainly found in the sacred buildings of the Parthenon ; and it is precisely through their spirit of sacrifice that they excel all others in Hellenic beauty. Ictinus and Pheidias would have said they sought for beauty ; but if dialectic had been in full action in their time, they might have been led to say, in whatever Greek seemed adequate, that they were seeking a beauty above man, and that all man's possessions and powers would be cheap in comparison with it. This is the key-note of Christian self-sacrifice, if not of monastic severity ; both which, as has been continually observed, are neither Hebraic nor Christian in their origin, but simply human.

There is little to be said of the composite order, except that it displays the Roman fault of unintelligent combination and vain attempt to unite the beauties of two different styles. At best, it resembles an Ionic capital growing out of a

Corinthian ; but many would say that the joining is always too evident to allow the suggestion of organic growth. Nothing could be worse in the first instance than the result of these attempts at combination without composition. The Romans not only collected works of art, virtually for destruction ; but combined styles till they were re-barbarised. There is no harsher lesson to the artist, or to the conqueror, on the vanity of earthly things, than "that gorgeous but melancholy catastrophe, by which all styles of architecture were gathered in wild confusion at Rome, there to perish beneath the luxury and crime of the mighty people who had made her the capital of Europe."

The Christian faith, however, was destined to preserve and adopt the principles of Greek beauty. And the Composite arcade is of great importance in the history of Christian Gothic art, because it marks, or in fact it is, the way of transition from the broad Athenian entablature to the long successions of Lombard arches which give horizontal perspectives of almost equal grandeur.

Its rudiment is two pillars supporting a somewhat long entablature, and requiring an arch behind for additional support. They are raised on pedestals to make them look of more importance, and in consequence only look ornamental, as the arch evidently does the work of support. Consequently, they are either dispensed with, and their capitals and cornice used as string-course to ornament the arches (which often have decorated keystones as well), or, in the hands of true and powerful builders, the arch-piers can be turned again into massive columns and capitals, which, like those of the Doge's Palace at Venice, will invite new sculptors, and admit of intellectual progress, through original and varied subject.

The small colonnades of the Lombard school, used story above story, as in the Baptistery and Campanile of Pisa, may err in using constructive architecture by way of decoration. They gain much, however, in delicacy and beauty, in deep shade and light, in expression of redundant life and dedicated energy. Their richness is not barbarous, but full of idea, and free alike from dulness and ostentation. And the Lombard arcade, circular or oblong-square, it unquestionably derived

from the Greek or Roman colonnade. The mole or mausoleum of Hadrian, with its magnificent base and attic, and order of lofty columns above, was the legitimate parent of the pillared domes which succeeded it, from Pisa to S. Paul's ; and the oblong-square arcade is the rudiment of the basilica. The earliest or Greek basilicæ, and some of those first erected in Rome, were in fact colonnades and no more. This subject requires separate treatment ; but here we may repeat, that the walled-in and covered basilica is Roman rather than Greek, since Roman climate required more protection. Further, the Christian Church not only occupied or reproduced the basilicæ, but originated for herself that type of her humiliation as of her hope, the fourfold or cruciform basilica with its central dome. It is the first instance of Christian ideal interposing with power on architecture, and instituting a symbolic structure of its own. The basilica and the sepulchral chapel (mortuary or commemorative, subterranean or palatial) will ultimately be found to be the rudiments of all Christian churches.

It is probable that the earliest Church in Rome, accustomed to worship in the cubicula which held the remains of her martyrs, and owning so many and so tender associations with the cemetery interiors, would give greater attention to decorating the interiors of her buildings than to the external splendour of the Attic peristyle. So, at all events, it was. Climate and the necessities of Christian ritual worked together, and drew attention to the inner decoration of a building. The Church's worship had been in so many cases subterranean, when her buildings had no outside at all, that all men's thoughts were given to indoor splendours, excepting when some soaring dome was raised to typify the vault of heaven whither they were all summoned. And it seems that the free use of mosaic for mural ornament is also connected with the catacomb chapels and arcosolia. The Fossor-architects had no external light, and no means of using transparent colours transmitted through stained glass. All their light was internal and artificial, and they were led accordingly to cover their walls with a medium which not only reflected light, and economised lamps and torches, but which possessed

supreme beauty of colour effect, having no brilliant windows to compete with it. The contest between windows and mosaic, or painting, is a vexed and disturbing question with our own architects and painters. All we have to say about it is, that it never can be rightly solved by exaggerating colour on our walls to contend with that of our windows, but that the opaque or transparent pictures must, one or other, take the lead. The conditions of architecture must decide, and as the Northern or German Gothic employs larger spaces of glass, they must generally be insisted on in that style, in preference to the walls.

There is no doubt as to the antiquity of the arch, pointed or round—the former shape originates in the gable, and is exemplified by every child as he begins his house of cards. It is also the most natural form for “horizontal” vaultings, built or left in a wall; the true or radiating arch, built of wedge-shaped blocks, being naturally adapted to the circular shape. The Romans never used any other form, and the Cloaca Maxima¹ consists of three arches of this construction, one within another. Great constructions like the vaults of Mycenæ and Tiryns, hewn as it were out of the solid substance of the wall, and supported as part of it, and not as wedge-like blocks by their own coherence, have nothing to do with the transition of the true arch from Roman to Gothic. And there was this special fitness in the radiating arch for Christian and Northern Gothic work, that it lent itself in particular to architecture of domestic character and the minor materials. Baths and cloacæ could not and needed not all be carried out in the Pentelic marble which Attic temples had at hand. The utilitarian buildings of Rome are made admirable and impressive by scale and skill in rough material, and in them we pass in some degree from the impressions of beauty into those of disciplined and proportioned force. The Pantheon, as combining both in the highest degree, must be for ever considered to hold the same position in Latin and derivative architecture as the Parthenon in pure Greek. But less costly materials had to be used on a great scale throughout the Empire. The magnitude of Roman buildings was

¹ 14 feet diameter inside.

necessary to the greatness of Rome, and her citizens not only used the travertine of their own hills, but applied themselves vigorously to brickmaking. Brick edifices were so common in Rome up to the Augustan age, as to give occasion to the Emperor's boast that he (or more properly Vipsanius Agrippa) had found Rome of brick (*lateritiam*) and left her of marble, or, rather, encrusted with it. It was not necessary to mould blocks for the radiating arches. The thin well-burnt "tetradoron" or "pentadoron" tile answered every purpose, could be worked in anyhow, or be manufactured anywhere; and, with its fresh cement of lime burnt on the day of using, was almost imperishable. The arch, says Fergusson, was never properly understood till the Roman tiles were used for it. As with Babylonian bricks of more distant time, they were duly dated, with time and place, maker's name and consulate, and are often important chronological evidence. The 22nd Legion has been traced through great part of Germany by bricks which bear its name.¹ Bricks of the 6th and 9th Legions are found at York,² and dates thus obtained have been found of great value in determining the period of Christian sepulchral chambers, as in the cemetery of S. Domitilla, which contains dated tiles of Hadrian's reign. Mr. Parker's photographs of the House of Pudens contain excellent specimens of first and second century brick or tile-work, and illustrate its excellent application to radiating arches. The use of less splendid materials seems in time to have worked both ways, and ministered to pride of science instead of pride of state. Mr. Street has explained, in a manner equally interesting and convincing, how the progress of architectural skill, in building vast structures with bricks or stones of small size, no larger than a man could carry, gradually engrossed attention, so that men began to vie with each other in wonder-working ingenuities of construction, and to think less of sculpture and painting, or expression of solemn or inventive thought.

It is in Rome, as has been said, that the yet-enduring types of ancient architecture become secular rather than dedicated.

¹ E. Wiener, *De Legione R. xxii. Darmstadt*, 1830, pp. 106—137.

² See Wellbeloved's *Eboracum*.

In the total absence of any remains of a Grecian house, it is extremely difficult to reconstruct one from Vitruvius' hasty account of them in his own day, which is contradicted by other weighty authorities, even in such a matter as the relative positions of the Andronitis or men's, and the Gynæconitis, or women's apartments. Which were placed in front, or whether in after-times there were or were not two separate entrances in the same front, is duly discussed in Becker's "Charicles" (Excursus on the Greek House). The streets of Pompeii and Herculaneum are of course our great source of information; and as these cities were more Greek than Roman, no more instructive examples could have been preserved to us. Their construction can hardly connect them with Christian work of later days, excepting through one prevailing feature, and that a specially Greek one—the blankness of their house-fronts. Their internal ornament must be considered under the heads of Græco-Roman sculpture and picture. Be it observed in passing, that it is much to be regretted that our own popular opinion of ancient art, especially of painting, should be founded on the voluptuous prettinesses of the walls of Pompeii. In England, this must have contributed greatly to the national suspicion of the graphic arts, as only vehicles of sensuality, the more beautiful the more subtle, and therefore the worse. Cities or ladies of pleasure are alike unfit to be typical specimens of their genus.

However, the bald street frontages of Athens, where, in her best days, men gave all their splendour to the glorious temples and theatres in which they met as true citizens,¹ were certainly repeated in the cities of Magna Græcia, and very probably in Rome,² unless they were varied by shops, in the lower floors of some blocks or *insulae*. Now, Christians were for the first two centuries accustomed to meet for prayer and sacraments in private houses, and must have been well used to their blank exterior. And this, added to their early

¹ Thuc. ii. 14, 65. Dicaearchus, Stat. Græc., p. 8. Due honour must always be given the Athenians in particular, for spending their wealth on public splendour rather than private luxury or ostentation. They certainly contrast very favourably with ourselves in this respect.

² See Dyer's *Pompeii*, p. 8.

associations of Eastern streets, close-latticed and featureless, may have contributed to the great Romano-Christian modification of the temple into the basilica and Christian church. All their decoration was within. The typical example of this progress is in the great hall of Diocletian's palace at Spalatro.¹ This building is transitional, and therefore full of wrong combinations, as pillars with nothing to support, or set on each other, or on consoles. Nevertheless, it possesses true grandeur, and the aisle pillars of its great hall, with their bent-up entablature, may make amends for the great arch at the end, which is magnificent, if wrong.

It was, in fact, the tendency of Roman building which made the Christian Church, as Professor Ruskin writes,² "seize upon the arch as her own, decorate and delight in it." It might be thought that Hebrew, Greek, and Syrian feeling would have adhered more closely to the shaft and horizontal frieze ; and, indeed, the great church of Bethlehem is distinguished from many others by its long continuous lintel-entablature.³ And here, at length, we reach what are popularly supposed to be the opposing æsthetic principles of Greek and Gothic, that the former is horizontal and "earth-bound," the latter vertical and "aspiring." There is no doubt that the use of the arch, breaking up the level entablature, did give upward direction to the eyes and thoughts of worshippers in the earliest basilicæ. And in due time the Northern races, dwellers in the shade of pine-woods, brought their associations of forest aisles and clustered columns into the Lombard work of Northern Italy, which became true or vertical Gothic on this side the Alps. The vertical transition doubtless began with the Roman arch, which the Church accepted as she found it in the basilicæ she built, or occupied, at the end of the persecutions. But as certainly, the Christian imagination did early and delightedly attach itself to the dome and round vault. Their great circular or spiral perspectives swept the eye upwards as surely and much more naturally than perpendicular lines. The idea

¹ See D'Agincourt, *Architecture*, pl. II., III. ; text, vol. i. p. 10.

² *Stones of Venice*, vol. i. p. 14.

³ Lord Lindsay's *History of Christian Art*, i. p. 23.

of aspiration or heaven-seeking as the intended characteristic of mediæval Gothic is harmless, and may be allowed, but really depends on the ocular laws of springing curve, rather than on perpendicularity. It is not sheer height straight upwards which gives this impression, it is the soaring curves of arches and vaults in perspective ; and the earliest and loftiest ideas of this kind have been given by the Oriental dome and cupola. "Soaring" lines, in fact, mean lines which mount like an eagle : and eagles do not, in fact, fly straight at the zenith, but sweep upward in vast spirals.¹ Nor does the true Gothic interior depend on perpendicular lines, but on perspectives of piers and arches, on curves radiating from clustered pillars, and on the consequent appearance of life and growth away into the vaulted roof. There is unquestionably a suggestion of Infinity and the vast Beyond in all springing or projectile curves : and even the semi-circles of the round arch, though mechanical and lifeless curves when seen in an elevation drawing, have full effect of life and vigour when seen in the perspectives of an actual colonnade. Height of course tells with great force, and the effect of the successive pairs of curves which form lofty arches is, perhaps, best expressed in a single word of Canon Kingsley's, "uprushing" piers. And as the curve of the round arch begins at the top of the shaft, it retains the idea of organic growth from a stem, like a palm-tree growth of immortal vegetation, interlacing its branches in cross-vaults, renewing its youth with every pier or column till the whole aisle is like an avenue in the garden of the Lord. Those who have often walked in palm-groves will have little difficulty in seeing an analogy between their branches and the round vaulting, which is parallel to that between the Gothic aisle and the avenues of the Northern forest.² So that the circular arch, leading on gradually (by its intersections or otherwise) to the pointed one, may well express the first inbreak of Christian hope, real yet unrealised, upon the level lines of Athenian strength, contented beauty, and thought bounded by the far and low horizon.

¹ See *Salmonia*, by Sir H. Davy.

² The palm is thus architecturally used in a sarcophagus. *Bottari*, vol. i. tav. 22.

But there was indeed a natural and deep feeling in primitive days against the pure Greek forms and their associations, which never can be forgotten. The most cursory reader of Tertullian, "*De Idolatria*," will apprehend the dread and defiance of idolatry which it represents, and which seems to have been almost universal in the Church. The Greek temple was built for its indweller, and had its agalma, the god's image, so named as a thing of beauty and delight: and this was emphatically to be the joy of Greeks no longer for ever. Whatever high symbolism of the One God may have qualified the image-worship of Pheidias and his generation, that race was gone, and blank superstition or blank denial had taken its place. The temple and all its beauties of line and colour, proportion, sculpture, painting, pæans, and incense, seemed a place of sacrifice to devils—where, in plain fact, the Pagan vices of desire and cruelty were fully sanctioned. Before its altars had stood shivering Lapsi, driven by fear or actual stress of torment to sprinkle on the Pagan flame the incense which they believed was endless ruin to their souls. The columned fronts and pediments, the open peristyles and fountains of lustration, all reminded men of the continuance of bloody sacrifice, which Christ had brought to an end. The agalma was within, it had often looked on impassively at the tortures of the Nazarene. All the deeds and honours of the false god were carven or graven around, and, glorious or shameful, they were a part of the building always. All the state and beauty of the Greek temple was bound to the polytheistic system; and we find in consequence that but few temples, comparatively speaking, were turned to the purposes of Christian worship. Basilicæ, or large halls, were occupied before and after the Peace of the Church; and the usual domestic ornament of such rooms in the large houses of the richer converts (as in the palace of Pudens) gave no offence to the assembled congregations. They came, indeed, to give symbolic meanings of their own to favourite Gentile subjects, as vines and shepherds; and to construct a system of picture-teaching for themselves, which gradually extended to historic illustration of Holy Scripture.

But the inspiration or aspiration of the Christian arch sprang from far other associations than those of aerial pillars and lacework of fine tracery. The great Christian association which attached to it was that it had vaulted the dens and caves of the earth, whither the faithful had fled, for prayer and sacraments in the evil days. A glance at D'Agincourt (*Architecture*, pl. xii. xiii., &c.), or, quite as well, a reference to the late Mr. Wharton Marriott's article "Catacombs," in Smith's new *Dictionary of Christian Antiquities*, will show the reader the transition from the pure Roman-Christian arcosolium and table-tomb to the Lombard or Byzantine apse; and also prove to him the Etrurian origin of the early sepulchral architecture of Rome. For centuries of intense spiritual feeling, the forms of the catacomb vaults moulded men's thoughts of what a church should be. When power came to them, they accepted magnificence. Height and scale were necessary for the public worship of crowds of professing believers when the faith had won its way. Christians had no objection to enter into the labours of the heathen, and to occupy the basilicæ, since the temples were long retained for Pagan worship, and unsuited, as we have seen, to prayer or preaching, or administration of holy sacraments. But there is no doubt that the dim apses and domical vaultings, the scantily admitted light and constant use of lamps even in broad day-time; the sepulchral altar with its relics (in later days held necessary to the consecration of the altar), were all impressed on the Italian and Eastern ideals of the Early Church by scenes of danger and darkness, in secret cells of the tufa-lithoid of Rome and Naples, and the sandstone of Alexandria. As has been suggested, the main division of all Christian churches in Rome is into above-ground or architectural; and subterranean, owing no allegiance to laws of the builder's art. Of the former, private basilicæ or halls in great houses came first: then public buildings may have been acquired; lastly, and somewhat rarely, temples may have been converted to Christian uses. A chief instance, providentially still in existence, of the domestic building thus adapted, is the traditional church in the house of Pudens, whose true ground-plan and

remaining walls have just been examined anew, and placed on faithful record for ever in photograph, by the care of Mr. J. H. Parker.¹

The ancient walls, certainly of the first or second century, are still part of the present church of S. Pudentiana, which was, in fact, the basilica or great hall of Pudens' palace, and yet retains these portions of its original structure behind the altar. Mr. Parker's photographs have their usual interest here, as documents beyond dispute, and the pictures of the brick arches are specially valuable, as giving the reader a clear idea at one glance of what the true first-century brick-work, or rather tilework, of Rome really was. There are types of the radiating arch, which fully bear out Mr. Fergusson's observations on it; the thinness of the tiles and excellence of the cement render keystones unnecessary, and bind the whole wall together in one imperishable mass.

Passing over the legendary, but by no means improbable account of the family of Pudens,² and his connection with Britain by marriage with Gladys, or Claudia, daughter of Claudius Cosidubnus of Britain, possibly Claudia in 2 Tim. iv. 21,³ we may fairly take Mr. Parker's sketch of the archæological "case" for the house of Pudens.⁴

Anastasius gives the life of Pius I. as Bishop of Rome, A.D. 154—162. Pius was, according to tradition, the grandson of Pudens, the friend of St. Paul. He made the Thermæ of Novatus in the Patrician Street into a church to his sister, S. Potentiana or Pudentiana the martyr (*dedicavit ecclesiam Thermas Novati in vico Patricio*). This may remind us of the consecration of the Pantheon in the time of Phocas; but these baths of Novatus are identified with the baths of Timotheus (a member of the Pudens family), where S. Justin Martyr had lived till within a short time of his death.⁵ No

¹ Photographs 178, 1734, 1735.

² See Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, s. v. Pudens.

³ This is certainly confirmed by Martial, in Epig. lib. i. 31, 29; v. 48; vi. 58; vii. 77. "Ad Rufum de Nuptiis Pudentis et Claudie peregrinæ." Claudia cæruleis cum sit Rufina Britannis." Edita xi. and iv. 13. "Claudia, Rufe, meo nubit peregrina Pudenti," &c.

⁴ Lecture to the Royal Archæological Institute, June 2, 1871. Also in Mr. Hemans' *Monuments of Ancient Rome*.

⁵ S. P. N. Justini, Phil. et Martyri, Opera. Ed. Bened. Par. 1742, fol. p. 386.

polemical issue depends on this matter, and it seems unreasonable to dispute every fact about Roman martyrs only because they suffered at Rome. These baths may very well have been a part of the large area of the Domus belonging to Pudens in the first century ; which was probably converted into an *insula*, or block of smaller houses, in the course of the next hundred and fifty years ; so as to be most popularly known by its baths. But the more important part of the evidence, the best confirmed by Mr. Parker's personal inspection and careful photography, is the following:—

“The archæological evidence is strongly in favour of the truth of these traditions ; the existing remains of some great palace of the first century, with alterations of the second, are very distinct. It was built against the southern cliff of the Viminal Hill. The cellars under the houses in the Via de S. Pudentiana (originally called the Vicus Patricius) consist of a series of long, narrow vaulted chambers, the arches of which are built of the fine brickwork of the first century. . . . The subterranean church is formed out of these long, narrow vaults, with arches pierced through the walls, and with clerestory windows made over them. These windows must have opened into an area, and so were just below the level of the ground, and therefore out of sight. *The whole arrangement was admirably calculated to avoid observation in times of persecution.* But the persecutions usually lasted but a few months only : at other times the Christians were treated like other citizens, and governed by the same laws. They could and did assemble in each other's houses at ordinary times : usually, as their numbers increased, in the basilica, or great hall, the largest room in the house. This was evidently the case in the house of Pudens, as the *present* church of St. Pudentiana stands in the original hall of the palace ; and the outer wall of it can be seen behind the altar, with the large hall windows in it of the first century, filled up with brickwork of the second, so nearly resembling the original construction that it is not easy at once to distinguish them. The original wall and arches of the hall windows agree perfectly with the arches in the cellars and the subterranean church.”

Hot-air flues are also found cut in the wall of the first

century; which connects all with the Thermæ. The name Titulus Pudentis is applied to the place by Anastasius:¹ "Titulum Pudentis, *i.e.* ecclesiam Sanctiæ Potentianæ (Pudentianæ) in ruinis positam noviter reparavit."

As we have said, there is no reason why any party should wish to dispute the authenticity of this traditional history of existing remains. The vaults, and especially their material, are documentary evidence; let it not be said that the brick-work, like that quoted in evidence by Jack Cade, is not distinguishable from other works in the same material, for it is unmistakably first and second-century. Mr. Parker's examples enable any person to distinguish at once between the bricks of earlier and later ages, and these are certainly of the earliest; and, taken with the tradition, they are a most important feature in early Church history, and illustrate the quiet growth of Christian life in Rome, giving us what is so much wanted, a sense of its progress in peaceful times, when the Faith all unnoticed grew mightily and prevailed, and when the principal feature noticed in the demeanour and life of its professors was how greatly they loved one another. Such times are gone: yet in all our complaints of each other's frowardness and laments over unavoidable schisms, we may consider that a certain undefined peace and desire of peace, which is love, is possible and exists even now, in the intermissions of anxious disputation and burning questions, as it did in the persecuted Church; which could not quarrel within itself, because it was threatened from without with mocking and scourging, fire and lions. Through all this, these men's love for each other in their Lord made life endurable and death a victory.

Roman portrait-sculpture must have begun with the Images of departed ancestors; and this in itself would have much to do with its inferiority, because it took sculpture out of the temples, and prevented its being, as in Greece, a necessary addition to architecture. Nevertheless, the household faith and service of Rome to the dead priests of the Hearth-fire was a genuine thing in early times, and so were the Lares. Virgil shows his respect for it by making Æneas

¹ xlvii. 343. Hadrian I. A.D. 772—795.

bear off his household images. The *jus imaginum* was the distinction of ennobled plebeians, who had held curule office; but it rested on immemorial usage. These Imagines were family portraits, figures, with masks of coloured wax, doubtless dreadfully like the originals, especially about the nose.¹ The imagines, then, stood in the atrium of each house near the fire, and in process of time became black, sticky, and grotesque, no doubt; but they were perfectly real and genuine portraits, and round them hung dented shields, and spears hewn and blunted, and captured mail: the earlier Roman atrium had its resemblance to the mediæval hall so far. Indeed it may connect the ritual or religious ceremonial of ancient and modern Italy rather curiously in the mind of a traveller if we quote the fact (from Mr. Long's article, "Nobiles," Smith's *Dictionary of Antiquities*) that these effigies were generally inclosed in small wooden receptacles, apparently "in the form of temples (ξύλινα ναῖδια, Polyb. vi. 53), but that on certain festival days and during great ceremonies they were opened, crowned with bay (*laureatæ*), and carried in procession." Nothing could prove a clearer connection between the primal services, expressive of love and veneration for the majority gone before, worshippers of the unseen God (which the Christian Church sanctifies in her creed as the Communion of Saints),—and its development into idolatry and divided worship withdrawn from the One God, as soon as the spiritual vision of the worshippers was dulled with time and sin.

However, no art or school of art, except perhaps the taste for and practice of portraiture, was developed out of the *jus Imaginum* by the Roman people. It is necessary in the

¹ Pliny *Nat. Hist.* xxxv. 2, *expressi cera vultus*. He complains of general loss of interest in portraiture, and continues thus, in Philemon Holland's translation: "These were the images that attended the funerals of any that was to be entered out of that stocke and lineage. Thus always as any gentleman died, a man should see a goodly traine of all those that were living of that house, accompanying the corpes, causing also the images of their predecessors to walke ranke by ranke in order, according to their severall descents: in which solemne shew, the whole generation that ever was of that familie represented by those images, is there present, readie to perform that last dutie and honour to their kin-man. Moreover, &c., &c. And, verily, this was to the maister and owner a great spur unto valour and virtue."

heading of this chapter to connect the word Rome with the word Art, because for a series of ages a large proportion of the best works of art have always been kept in Rome, often destroyed with her destructions. But, strictly speaking, Rome had no inventive share in Fine Art. Her arts were exactly as Virgil described them, those of crushing and exterminating warfare, conquest, and prolonged military occupation. To spare the submissive, that is to say to leave those people in possession of their lives who cared to retain them when everything else was taken away; and to exterminate the proud, that is to say all who clung to their independence—to tear and break in pieces with teeth and talons of iron, was the unvaried custom of the Republic and Empire. The great Roman modifications and discoveries in art are due to the Etruscan element in Rome, as the polygonal roadways, the arch and vault; though doubtless the use of bricks (*i.e.* broad flat tiles) was a great Roman improvement in the round arch. Still Rome laid hands on the arts as on everything else, and spread them over Europe with endless repetition and multiplication. She gave men much for their liberty, and they continued to lead a life as nearly as possible similar to the habits and customs of their independence. And without adopting any optimistic or laudatory view of Roman rule, still less (for it is impossible) of Roman conquest, one cannot but see that submissive allies were treated at least well enough to make them into secure bases for more advanced operations of conquest: that war was forbidden and the Pax Romana maintained throughout the whole Imperium. When nature had covered the ghastly tracks of the legions, and the bones of slain freemen had returned to their dust, fresh generations grew up in subjection, and under an iron order which gave full security, and allowed even happiness in its way. It was slowly and surely enervating and demoralising, but did not prohibit the domestic virtues, and Christian morality held its own under it. Indeed we cannot say that the Athens of Demosthenes, or the Egypt of Ptolemy, or the Asia of Antiochus, or the Tarentum of Pyrrhus's day, could have gone on for ever, or that either would have been (as a body politic, or nation), a specially

admirable example to races to come. We are apt to argue, in view of the calamities of war and the ferocity of Roman devastation, as if all men slain with pilum and broadsword would have been immortal without them, or at least have died luxuriously in bed and enjoyed respectable cremation. It is useless to compare the facts of history with any ideal order of things. To the end of time, mankind must look shuddering on records or evidences of death and all the evil work which culminates in it, often in uncertainty whose fate has been the worse, that of the slain or of the slayer. Before her boundaries had reached their full extent Rome had begun to tear out her own entrails. The massacres of Thrasymene and Cannæ were never repaired; but were renewed by the social wars until the desolation of Italy, promised in vision to the implacable enemy,¹ was fully accomplished by the Imperial city, herself for herself. The Augustan age had its villas of degrading luxury, its latifundia and rustic families of wretched slaves, scarcely disguising the desolation of the wasted corn-lands which had once fed the conquering yeomen of Latium.

Excluding Marcellus, the sword of Rome, and Fabius Maximus, who showed moderation and some religious feeling (with the Scipios, who seem to have taken a literary view of art, and foreseen the triumphs of Greek education in their own country) from the list of chief spoliators; there remain C. Manlius, Fulvius Nobilior, (who plundered the temples of Ambracia), Mummius and Sulla, Lucullus, Scaurus and Verres. Yet the stores of the Rhodian workshops were inexhaustible, and the artistic population must have been very large: able to supply a great Greek school in Rome, as in the seventh century, A.D., when barbarism had returned to her decadence. Native talent was overpowered; but there was patronage enough through portraiture, triumphant bas-relief, and florid architectural ornament,² to form what are

¹ Cicero, *De Divin.* i. 24.

² There had long been an occasional demand for scenes of battle and victory at Rome; and Æmilius's order about importing a Greek painter and a philosopher cannot have been the earliest instance of patronage in the former line. There was a picture of the Feast of Volones, or freedmen-soldiers, of Tiberius Gracchus

called the arts of the Augustan age. What belongs to that period is the development of the arch and vault ; understood from the earliest times,¹ but now worked out in the best-adapted material, the broad tile-bricks and excellent mortar of the first century A.D.

Roman religion had so much to do with ancestral and sepulchral rites, that a great part of the transition of decoration between Greek and Teutonic is traceable in sepulchres only, as D'Agincourt says : and Rome is herself a sufficient place of tombs for all inquiries. Ours will lead us to the subjects of interment, cremation, and the great catacomb or subterranean system ; and a connecting example of the burial place and sarcophagi of the great Æmilian house yet remains to us, called the Tomb of the Scipios. This will come in more properly at the beginning of our chapters on the Christian Catacombs. Meanwhile, as the mural ornament of all these sepulchres is by painting rather than sculpture, there are plates and descriptions in the works of M. Seroux d'Agincourt which we here strongly recommend the reader to look at if he can, Plates 10, 11, and 12, vol. v. *Architecture* (the Tomb of the Scipios is at plate 12, descriptions in vol. iii., p. 8, 9). These are from Etruscan tombs at Tarquinii, or Corneta, near Civita Vecchia, and they illustrate the decoration, as the Æmilian tomb does the construction of the earlier catacombs. The first may be described here, as showing in some measure what ancient Roman painting would have been even without the influx of Greek models.

The Tarquinian tombs may be briefly described as broad low-browed sepulchral chambers supported by massive pillars,

after the battle of Beneventum, consecrated by him in the Temple of Liberty on the Aventine in B.C. 213 (Livy xxiv. 16), and this was probably by a Greek.

¹ Fergusson, *Hist. Architecture*, vol. i. 188 ; part I. ; bk. II. ch. v. "It seems that the Assyrians used the pointed arch for tunnels, aqueducts, and generally for underground work where they feared great superincumbent pressure on the apex, and the round arch above ground, where that was not to be dreaded ; and in this they probably showed more science than we do in such works." His earliest round arches are one, from a tomb near the Geezeh pyramids, a round radiating vault of four courses over a singular three-stoned arch ; and the city gates of Khorsabad (pp. 158-187) perfect enough to prove that the arch was thoroughly understood in the time of Sargon.

either rock-hewn, or covered by tumuli, and at no great distance below the surface of the earth. They are ornamented with paintings referring to the condition of the soul after death. There are dark angels or genii, with talaria added to their wings, who are leading a human figure away, apparently to punishment, while a white form, perhaps the Good Angel, seems to intercede. There is a chariot of Good and Evil, or of Night and Day, as it would seem, drawn by a black and a white genius. There are also battles, and combats with wild beasts, which in some degree remind us of the numerous introductions of secular subjects into the works of the catacombs, and particularly of the Lombard churches. The animals are drawn with spirit, and one group in particular must remind all who are acquainted with the catacomb pictures of the picture of Daniel between two lions, so constantly repeated in the Christian cemeteries. Only in this instance the lions appear to be devouring their victim, or endeavouring to do so. They have swallowed each an arm nearly up to the shoulder : but his struggles (though not violent enough to interfere with decorative grouping) seem to inconvenience them internally ; and they are regarding each other with an air of partial suffocation, and an apparent doubt whether enough may not have been done for honour, as well as healthful digestion. It seems possible that the rude representation of Daniel untouched between two lions, so frequent in Christian cemeteries, may be connected with this fancy-subject, or perhaps allegory, of Etrurian tombs. Gladiatorial combats and huntings of wild beasts were also represented on Roman tombs, as on that of Scaurus in the Street of Tombs at Pompeii.

Thither, at least to Pompeii, we must now betake ourselves to form some idea of remaining relics of the paintings of the Augustan age. They have been strangely preserved for us, saved, literally as by fire, though certainly not purified so completely as might be wished ; the *ῥύαξ*, as Thucydides calls it, the outburst of lava and rain of ashes, have kept decipherable in the cities of Magna Græcia, what man has destroyed everywhere else in the world. The only other remark to be made must not lead us too far. It is that the

gladiatorial exhibitions were really the chief means of destroying all taste for true art and its gentle pleasures in the Roman people. Somewhat more may be said of this: but it is evident at sight that the excitement of cruelty must overpower any feeling for natural beauty, except the most grossly sensual; and it is found as a fact that cruelty is generally connected either with dulness of feeling incapable of art, or with that rage of satiety, male and female, which has only eyes for the evil side of art, and has ceased to feel even that as a stimulus. The character of Nero is in fact the logical development of Roman art and luxury, and he has his sympathisers accordingly in modern days. But now and then faithful and powerful witness is borne to the dreadful transition from sensuality to cruelty, as in the following lines from *The Epic of Hades* :—

There comes a time
When the insatiate brute within the man,
Weary with wallowing in the mire, leaps forth
Devouring, and the cloven satyr-hoof
Grows to the rending claw, and the soul sinks,
And leaves the man a devil, all his sin
Grown savourless : and yet he longs to sin,
And longs in vain for ever.

For a few easily accessible specimens of Roman portrait-sculpture, original or in photograph, see list at the end of this book.

CHAPTER II.

GRECO-ROMAN PAINTING—THE WALLS OF POMPEII.

THOUGH the pictures which once adorned the walls of Pompeii and Herculaneum are not always agreeable objects of contemplation, some considerable attention should be paid them by an attentive student of art or history, taking them as documents illustrative of the times which preceded and succeeded them, as well as of their own. From the decoration of these little pleasure-cities of Magna Græcia we may know pretty well what popular Greek art had come to ; what was its standard and aim, if any ; what amount of beauty it retained ; what signs of failure are visible in technical power up to A.D. 79 ; and what, on the whole, Roman patrons and employers of the first century really paid their artists to do. And further, the system of decoration, the geometrical borders and breaking up of walls into panels, should be compared with those of the earlier Catacombs, as they will be found valuable means of distinction, and enable the traveller to make some conjectures as to the date of the first painting of many cubicula. Gell's work and Dyer's *Pompeii* are always accessible : the larger French and German *Herculaneum et Pompeii* is at least easy to find in libraries, with the exception of the eighth volume, which most private persons would be inclined to subject to cremation. Finally, Mr. J. W. Parker's *Photographs of Pompeian Frescoes*, with the earlier ones from the tomb of Statilius Taurus, and others of the first century from the Villa Pamphili Doria at Rome, will give the best possible idea of the present state,

and not a bad one of the original appearance and technical skill, of the wall paintings. Finally, a visit to the Crystal Palace with Lord Lytton's *Last Days of Pompeii* in one's hand will give anybody with some slight knowledge of Roman history a fair enough ground-work to start from in study of the progress, or rather rapid decadence, of Græco-Roman painting. He will see that, ill-done as they are, the Christian pictures of the cemeteries do for a time continue this style of decoration with their own subjects, until they fail altogether. He will understand from these works in a great degree—in a still greater from third and fourth-century sculptures—how virtually hopeless the decadence of heathen art had become before Christ's coming, and how completely its ruin was accomplished, before the Christian Church had any power over Pagan temples or statues. The very best works of Pompeian art are nugatory as compared with the great Greek schools; the less important paintings are facile and often pretty, with harmless playful fancies and imagery. There is every conceivable variety of gracefully-equivocal figure-painting, and some work of which nothing need be said, except that it goes far to bear out St. Paul in Romans i. and Juvenal in some of his worst Satires.¹

The Christian faith does not stand on its morality alone. To plead that as triumphant over all evil would be to assert a success which is yet withheld. The existence of both immorality and infidelity is yet a solemn and insuperable fact; but we Christians have an equal right to assert our own existence; as well as our own sincerity; and to say that races of greater strength and wilder passions than the Romans or Greeks have learnt self-restraint from the Faith since the first century, generally by painful methods. The quotation at p. 17, from the Master of Balliol's *Epistles of St. Paul*, sums up all that need be said on this matter.

Pompeian art is entirely decorative, in the modern sense; pictures are parts of the general effect of a room; there is never any attempt at instruction or any ideal, better than that of present beauty; very skilful hands have been

¹ Some of the worst of these pictures were found in private rooms of palaces and great houses, not in public haunts of sin.

employed, but everything is trivial. Heroes are unheroic, gods unbelieved in, women dissipated, Amorini and pigmies tiresome. But these paintings show us the beginning of the end of Greek decadence, when manual skill and traditions of method and practice were all that was left ; when naturalist study had passed away, as well as religious aspiration ; when the athlete had turned into the gladiator, and the festival of Olympia and the Isthmus to the butcheries of the amphitheatre. Nevertheless, all has its historical value. Even the *inscripta lintea* of the tavern and the arena are now things beyond price, and the good old sign of the Chequers in our own villages (supposing it to remain anywhere) is a curious backward link to the days of Pompeii ; being, in fact, a reminiscence of the gladiators' backgammon-board.

These are relics of the humblest description of wall-ornament ; and much of what is now to be described is of the same grade of apparent indignity. Yet it has much to do with the Iconoclastic disputes of subsequent ages, and, therefore, very much to do with the history of the Eastern and Western Churches and Empires. We shall have to return to the subjects of composition and arrangement of panels and geometrical figures in decorating rooms, and to see how closely the living sepulchres of lava and ashes resemble the earlier cemeteries in the tufa. It may encourage all artists, who can throw any heart and spirit into their work, to consider how unlimited a prospect or chance they have of affecting other persons by it. The unknown catacomb painters, or Pompeian or Lombard workmen are studied by thoughtful people, after all their centuries ; and the carvings of Pheidias, with all their glory, are now attended to almost exclusively by professional draughtsmen and cavalry officers. The latter to this day find the Elgin room no uninstrusive variation from the riding-school, and thus in all human probability gain many of the advantages of classical education and culture, as they may best be gained, in honourable search for effectiveness in duty.

As the rudimentary form of one large class of Christian churches is to be sought in the humble arcosolia and domed vaults of the cemeteries, so the first efforts of Christian decoration are paintings on domes, vaults, and spandrels, and are

well adapted to round-arch construction at this day. Many examples of the earliest Christian work are truly classical, Augustan, and well adapted to Roman Renaissance buildings of that character ; so that our great metropolitan Cathedral might be adorned with patterns used by the Primitive Church and its martyrs, to the perfect satisfaction both of archæology and technical rigorism.

It would be delightful, could we produce examples of decoration from the walls of Christian dwellings where the brethren met in quiet days. No writer has ever ventured on an attempt to represent Christian happiness in primitive times, yet it can hardly be because there was not any. All their painting is so peaceful, gentle, and almost joyous in subject that it leaves no doubt that hope in their Master led His servants through fear and fightings not uncheerfully. They took their house-decoration into the catacombs ; and there, too, they learnt the sculpture of sarcophagi, in bas-relief only. The great rarity of detached statues or images may prove to us that iconoclastic troubles hardly existed, as such, in the Primitive Church ; and that images were for 300 years too heartily disliked by the people, as connected with Paganism, to give their teachers much uneasiness about idolatry within the Church. That arose with saint-worship, or, in other words, with the decay of the popular faith, which could no longer call directly on Christ the Lord as a heavenly Friend, and so required a sign, or mediators with the Mediator. Merely instructive sculpture and painting, historical and symbolic, existed from the first ; and from the first was taken as it was meant, and so it has been even to this day.

It is probable that the first acquisition by the Church of great basilicas as places of meeting, and the impulse thus given to Christian architecture in that form, led to important questions about decoration. The basilicas were full of statues of great men of times past,¹ besides painting and bas-relief ; and in many cases something would be wanted to take the

¹ See Milman, *Hist. Christianity*, vol. iii. book iv., ch. iv. p. 378, 1867, where the adoration paid to images of saints is traced to that which was allowed to be addressed to statues of Emperors. Damascenus justifies the former by the latter ; S. Jerome speaks of the latter as rank idolatry.

place of all this ornament. Hence the great impulse given to painting, and especially to mosaic; and from this need arose the great decorative movement, which is attached for the present to the scarcely-remembered name of Paulinus of Nola. Deities, or deified emperors, or their favourites, had been removed from the Christian Churches, to the scandal of Libanius and his modern co-religionists. The Church saw no difference between Sejanus and his master, and no doubt treated both their effigies as the mob of Rome did the dead favourite's.

The spirited animal-paintings of the Villa Pamphili-Doria have been already alluded to, and will be found in Mr. Parker's *Collection of Photographs*, Vol. xix., Nos. 2696, 2705, &c. They bear considerable resemblance in style to the works found in Pompeii, and also to those in the earliest Christian tombs and catacombs, as the tomb of Domitilla.¹ The Pompeian landscape possesses great naturalistic merit, to judge by M. Roux's records of it; and the existence of small landscapes in the Domitilla vault, and also in the Callixtine Catacomb, are strong arguments for the high antiquity of those cemeteries.

Greek patterns resemble each other in Pompeii as elsewhere; and there is marked resemblance between the pavement or vault-patterns which are found there and the Christian vault-ornaments of the Church of St. Constantine at Rome. Connecting-pictures between the pleasure-cities of Rome and its caves of Christian interment are not likely to be numerous; but De Rossi states that in the crypt of Lucina (now joined to the Catacomb of St. Sebastian) the Good Shepherd is repeated alternately with a woman's figure, which strongly resembles a Herculanean picture, supposed to have been copied from a statue by Calamis. The marine monsters, in the Callixtine Catacomb and elsewhere, who swallow and disgorge Jonah, are certainly remembrances of hippocampi and the like grotesques, exactly like those of Pompeii; and the emblematic picture of Ulysses and the Sirens reminds us easily of the fanciful allegories of the buried city.²

¹ See "Herc. et Pompeii," *Recueil Général*, M. Roux aîné, vol. iii. 5 série, pl. 3, pp. 12, 29, 33, 35, and to end of volume; also the Farmyard in Dyer, p. 389.

² A list of these subjects, and of examples of adopted treatment, will be given at the end of the chapter on the Christian Catacombs.

This characteristic of introducing apparently irrelevant decoration according to taste or play of fancy, as ornament for its own sake, seems to be derived from domestic painting, such as that on the walls of Pompeii. It prevails more in Gothic than in Greek art of the best age. In the Parthenon, no doubt, and in the greater temples, the minor paintings all had reference to the Deity ; but before Greek art came into Christian hands it had passed through many frivolous and laughter-loving phases in its lower departments ; and in the Catacombs, as in Pompeii just before them, and in the Gothic churches afterwards, all manner of representations are to be found along with the solemn symbols of the Christian Faith. "E uno fatto che ho costantemente notato," says De Rossi, "nei sotteranei cimiteri . . . imagine del cielo cosmico, o scene di pastorizia, di agricoltura, di cacce, di giuochi. Obvio è notissimo è il senso parabolico," &c.¹ All secular images, in fact, to which sacred meaning might be attached, or on which the light of the Gospel would rest at all, were freely adopted by the Church. Heathen workmen may have been employed ; and undoubtedly the traces of heathen design are numerous, though perhaps less so than we might expect, considering that the artists of the first two centuries could not well divest their minds of their whole stock-in-trade of subject, emblem, and fancy. As we shall see, some of the earlier paintings in St. Constantine, in the Callixtine Catacomb, and those of Domitilla and Prætextatus, are exactly what might be expected from Pompeian painters of genre landscape and figures, possessing no remarkable skill, but reproducing patterns they knew.

A few words on the materials and technicalities of Græco-Roman wall-painting may be appropriate here. In the great times of Greek art, it seems to be conclusively made out by M. Raoul Rochette that important paintings were done on panels let into walls, and not often, or not till later, on the wall itself, in either fresco or tempera. It may be well to explain that fresco means water-colours applied fresh to a wet plaster of lime and sand ; that tempera, distemper, or dry fresco mean painting with water-colours on a dry wall ; and

¹ *Roma Sotteranea*, vol. i. pp. 343, 4.

that the ancients never painted on canvas till the time of Nero, all mention of such works meaning embroidery or inwoven pattern or subject; as in Virgil, *Georg.* iii., "Purpurea intexti tollunt aulæa Britanni."

Further, the use of oil-colour, or of oil as a vehicle of colour, was equally unknown, wax being used instead; either with or without the encaustic process after the colours were laid. Pictures of important subjects were always easel pictures, as we call them, executed on panel or other solid substance, even in the time of Pliny, when wall-painting in a decorative way was fully in use. The ornamental painting *on* the walls of Pompeii is clearly founded on decoration intended to surround and set off more precious works embedded *in* the walls. What we hear of the transference of pictures from all parts of the world to Rome, of the soldiers playing dice on Aristides' panel-picture of Dionysius, used as a table, and the like, seems conclusive as to the universality of painting on wood in Greece. But it appears from Vitruvius (vii. 3, &c.) that fresco was the ordinary method of simply colouring walls, especially at Rome. The walls were divided into compartments or panels, evidently with the Greek idea of a central picture, which may or may not have been added. These inner tablets were called abaci, ἄβakes; and, according to Vitruvius (vii. 3), no fewer than seven coats of plaster, fine sand, or chalk and marble dust were successively laid on, so that the whole composition was perfectly bound together, and became a solid mass like marble, which could be detached from the wall in slabs, inclosed in frames, and transported to any distance. The finer works in Pompeii may be supposed to be executed on walls thus prepared; or the ground-colour, and perhaps a part of the pattern-decoration, were first done in fresco with wet plaster, and the figures and groups executed afterwards in distemper at leisure.

Somehow in this way the Christian work of the martyr-age must have been done, though in the humblest form and with rude and scantily-prepared materials. No discoveries have been made (so far as we are aware) of prepared panels, either of wood, as in the better days of Greece, or of successive coats of pulverised marble, &c., according to Vitruvius' recipes.

The vault and cemetery of St. Domitilla are certainly of the first century, the walls of the Catacomb of St. Prætextatus, and various remains in the Callixtine, are unquestionably not later than the second. The graceful and flowing ornament, naturalistic in treatment, yet severely arranged in patterns, adapted to the constructive form, with a total absence of stiffness, rude handling, or asceticism of spirit, characterise all these works and distinguish them from later Christian paintings. Some attempt at classification must be made, but will have to be deferred till the next chapter.

On any visit to a large library the student will do well to look at the architectural decorations in vol. i. of the *Recueil General, Herculanæum et Pompéi*, by M. Roux aîné, Paris, 1840, Firmin Didot, Frères; and compare plates 91 to 98 in that book with Aringhi, *Roma Subterranea*, vol. ii. pages 63, 97, 105 (at lib. iv. cap. xiv.), and pp. 292, 303, 315 (at lib. xiv. cap. xxxvii.). They all resemble each other in principle, that of breaking up a space of wall into panels, square or oblong if possible. But as the Christian work is all done on vaults, or soffits of broad arches, or in spandrils or parts of cavernous structure, and in dim light and by rude hands, there is of course difference enough between it and the correct squares and oblongs of the Pompeian examples. The last of these is the elaborate and beautiful panel-picture of *Leda and Tyn-darus*, with its surrounding decoration, but it has clear relation in composition to the simpler work, and through it to the Christian, which is in several cases pretty enough. De Rossi's coloured illustrations should be seen in his *Roma Sotterranea*, and reference has been made to Parker's Photographs.

These comparisons can only help to determine the great antiquity of these Catacomb cemeteries as prepared for their first tenants, and cannot prove anything about their present decoration. The vaulting pictures as a rule are of greater antiquity than paintings on the walls, which are often rudely retouched, or altogether restored or renewed by unskilful hands. (See chapter on Catacombs.)

Pompeian colours are varied and brilliant,¹ but more will be

¹ Vitruvius on Colours, *De Architectura*, vii. 7-14. He expresses contempt for the unmeaning grotesques in use, ch. v.

learnt about them by a visit to the Crystal Palace than in any other way. Various deep blues and violets, warm whites, rose, golden yellow, and green were probably the chief colours of dresses. The landscapes are very fanciful, and, as M. Barré remarks, almost Chinese ; and he humorously observes that their perspective reminds him a good deal of that celebrated print of Hogarth which illustrates irregularities in that matter. Almost all is fancy architecture ; and there seems to have been little study of nature, except perhaps in a few farm-yard subjects, and from children. The Arts of Greece have run their course : from Athene to Aphrodite of Heaven, from her to Phryne of Earth, from her to Cotytto under the Earth. It is probably the greatest scandal in the history of Christendom, or rather the chief instance in which Christianity has been outraged by Pagans within her pale, that the same course has been run over and over again in the Arts of the Renaissance. But if we go back two hundred years from the end of Pompeii to the last genuine sculpture of the Republic of Rome, one odd coincidence may strike the antiquarian. That latest sculpture is the Wolf ; the first Christian sculpture is the Good Shepherd ; and the last wildly-barbarous work of decay, the ivory Diptych of Rambona, represents the Wolf and Twins at the feet of its savage Crucifix.

Two topics remain before we begin our chapters on the Church's use of Art. As so much has been said, with great correctness, about the sepulchral nature and origin of Christian art, and even of Christian religious service ; and our object is to show how Christianity (adapting itself to national habit, and customs, not heathen but human) took possession of the relics of classical art for the Northern races ; it seems necessary to go back to Greece once more, and see what traces of the Christian tomb of the Primitive Church, or, if none, what slight resemblances in sepulchral buildings or remains can be produced, to connect Gothic and Greek monuments of burial directly, and not through a Roman medium. Mr. Ferguson discusses the subject briefly, as far as architectural tombs are concerned. The Greeks, he says, like other Aryan races, were never tomb-builders, and built monuments are rare.

The Mausoleum of Halicarnassus and the Lion Tomb of Cnidus are his chosen examples. But we are here interested in domestic burial and in rock-hewn tombs, as well as built ones. The pious anxiety of all Hellenes for proper interment, their own and their relatives', in order to admission into Elysium, or even to just judgment, makes the relics of their sepulture highly important. But as to large monumental tombs, this statement is no doubt correct. But few Greek tombs remain to be connected with Gothic. The ancients of both races must be content with Pericles' great consolation that ἀνδρῶν ἐπιφανῶν πᾶσα γῆ τάφος. A Lycian tomb discovered by Sir. C. Fellows, and referred to by Dr. Smith (*Dict. Antiq.*; "Funus," p. 556), consists of a stone sarcophagus resting on broad stone plinths, and covered with obtusely-pointed arches of absolutely Gothic appearance. A very interesting example is given¹ in a woodcut from Antiphellus. But at Xanthus, where the tombs are still more numerous, the similarity to what we know of the Christian burial of the Catacombs is more striking. They are cut into the rock or are formed by cutting it away, leaving the tombs standing like works of sculpture (Fellows, p. 226). The same is the case at Telmessus, where they are hewn out of the rock in form of temples. In the chapter on the Catacombs in this book (as indeed in D'Agincourt, by Lord Lindsay, and elsewhere) the formation of the Christian arcosolium, or sepulchral apse, and altar, by cutting away the rock behind and above the tufa-cut tomb, is duly described as exactly the same as in the Lycian tombs. They have their parallels, again, like every other form of rock-burial, on the northern and eastern sides of Jerusalem, where the hill-side is honeycombed with the graves of silent multitudes in the Valley of Decision.

Greek monuments are classified fourfold by Dr. Smith: as (1) *στήλαι*, pillars or upright stone tablets; (2) *κίονες*, columns; (3) *ναῖδια* or *ἡρώα*, small buildings in the form of temples; and (4) *τράπεζαι*, flat square stones, called *mensæ* also by Cicero. An *ἡρώον* from Stachelberg, pt. i., given also in Dr. Smith's article (Funus), has so startling a resemblance to a

¹ Fellows' *Excursions in Asia Minor*, p. 219.

modern wayside shrine that I am glad to pass it over as not necessarily connected with our period of inquiry. But it is curious and pleasing to observe that the *ναῖδα*, or little shrines of Greece, certainly originated that shrine-like ideal of the Holy Sepulchre which is so often found in Byzantine art. See, for example, the *Crucifixion* and *Resurrection* in the precious MS. of the Syrian monk Rabula, now in the Laurentian Library at Florence.¹

This and the following note belong to Christian sculpture as well as sepulture, but they are useful as connecting the ancestral or sepulchral side of both Roman and Greek religion with what may harmlessly be called the sepulchral cultus of the Christian Faith. Religion is of a world beyond death; Faith is the substance of things hoped for after death: and the revelation of life and immortality for all men strongly affected all men's views of death, without fundamentally altering their way of ordering or commemorating their dead.

The sarcophagus then connects Greek burial with early Christian, whether the receptacle so-called be, in its original form, a *loculus* cut in the tufa and then isolated, or if it be simply a stone coffin. I find in Smith's *Dictionary of Antiquities*, (s. v. "Assos," and elsewhere) that the word Sarcophagus is derived from the stone or marble of Assos in Mysia (*Lapis Assius*), which had the quality of destroying flesh (Plin. ii. 96). Sometimes it was pounded and thrown over the dead; but its name, "Flesh-consuming," became common to all stone coffins and even tombs. The earliest and most beautiful Christian sarcophagus which we know of bears the consular date of A.D. 359, and was carved for Junius Bassus; but many years must have passed before such elaborate and minute sculpture (superior in this case to all other known work of the time) could have been bestowed on a Christian sepulchre. The catacomb paintings may have been, and generally seem to have been, done hastily or by indifferent workmen who repeated well-known patterns; but this, with the tomb of Probus and Proba, and some others, must have taken

¹ Figured by Assemani, in his *Catalogus Bibliotheca Laurentina*; in Tyrwhitt's *Art Teaching of the Primitive Church*, and elsewhere.

much of the time of an excellent designer and carver. Even the first transition from the *loculus* into the solid stone chest must have been made by gradual progress. The rudiment, the primitive Christian grave, was always the *loculus* or niche cut lengthways in the soft granular tufa of the catacombs, which seems to have been of an absorbent nature, and to have soon dispersed the moisture of decay, without much smell or inconvenience. It was a cell cut in the living rock, like the tomb at Xanthus, in Lycia, or the many mansions of the vast cemeteries of the Valley of Hinnom, which no pilgrim to Jerusalem can ever forget. Its front was closed with large flat tile-bricks ; but if it contained a martyr or other person specially remembered or regarded, it had an *arcosolium* or small half apse hollowed out above it ; so that its upper surface became a flat lid or table, on which Holy Communion might be celebrated. It thus became an altar tomb, and was often completed, and left as a chest, by having the rock cut away all round ; after which its sides might be carved or inlaid, or the inmate might be translated to a costly marble sarcophagus, which would take the place of his original cell of rest in the tufa. A certain amount of fresco or mosaic ornament in the half-vault and sides of the hewn-out apse would complete the small *cubiculum* or chapel. The difference between the ethnic Greek tomb and the Christian is that the former is generally completed by a pediment and front cut in the solid (as very remarkably at Petra), and becomes a handsome *œdicula*, instead of the humbler *loculus*.

There is what they call a "classic," or great standard example, of the use of *loculi* and tombs together in the natural rock. It is the great tomb of the Scipios, so well described and illustrated by D'Agincourt. It is of importance also as the leading instance of heathen burial rather than cremation. The Cornelian race always buried their dead, to the time of Sylla, whose hideous condition at his death made burning advisable. Their cemetery is near the Appian cells ; dedicated "*libertis libertabusque*," and occupied by the familia, the faithful slaves and servants of the house who rested with their masters. Several larger tombs were found, though only one

of hewn stone. The vaults had been penetrated before by successive occupants of the soil above, and their hasty and clandestine search for treasure had done much mischief, upsetting and breaking coffins and carvings, and leaving nothing in its proper place. Indeed, the regularly-conducted search, in 1780-2, when the tomb was discovered, seems not to have been methodical enough; and D'Agincourt complains, like everybody else who has the least regard for history, of the disorder, and want of registry or care for the relics discovered. They were certainly of different ages, and would have been valuable illustrations to the history of the later republic. He describes the popular interest and delight which ensued on the first discovery, on May 23, 1780. With his friend, the Chev. d'Azara, he offered to purchase and inclose the whole sepulchre, and raise over it a portico or peristyle of the style of the first building, or of its principal tomb, that of L. C. Scipio Barbatus. This was rejected, and the whole sepulchre, in fact, rifled. Pius VI., like his predecessors, could not resist transporting the great sarcophagus of Scipio Barbatus to the Papal collections at the Vatican, where it still remains; and nobody else resisted the chance of appropriating what they could get. This tomb is of hard peperino, and well carved in a kind of Doric style, which shows that a good deal of Greek art was being brought into Rome at a far earlier date than the Macedonian wars, or the transference from Corinth. The Scipios were, as has been said, a family of advanced culture, and anxious to introduce all they could. In any case the basement, cornice, composition, and decoration of this sarcophagus are of high merit, and give it very much the appearance of a stone Altar. Indeed, as the offerings made to the manes were often poured over or into the actual chest, it was an Altar to all intents. All the inscriptions in the vault but three were removed to the Vatican museum, and copies substituted, commonly in the wrong places. All that might have been rearranged, or restored as matter of history, vanished before relic-hunters and antiquarians. The skeleton of Scipio Barbatus, or whatever was left of it—since by Mr. Hemans' account, it was still in existence—"was carried away, not without honour indeed, by a Venetian

senator, who raised a modest monument for its final resting-place, at his villa near Padua." He who had lived within that decaying framework had been Consul Romanus in A.U.C. 456, B.C. 297, and contributed, with old Papirius Cursor, to the end of the Samnite Wars. He was the great-grandfather of the destroyer of Carthage.

BOOK II.

C H R I S T I A N.



PART I.—CONSTRUCTION.

CHAPTER I.

THE CATACOMBS AND THEIR PAINTINGS.

IN a book or essay on historical archæology and its remaining monuments, it is no doubt desirable, if possible, to treat the three arts properly, or in their *à priori* order. Architecture comes first; then sculpture as more immediately connected with the House or Temple; and painting next, as essentially ornamental. But we have to follow the history of races who preserved the arts for the use of Teutonic Christianity thus far; and at the end of the first century, with the first Christian cemeteries at Rome, the earliest Christian work claims our attention. Hitherto architecture and sculpture have preceded; but we have now to do with subterranean habitations in which one had no existence and the other was subordinate. Here construction meant excavation, and decoration depended on colour; so that the history of Christian art, as Christian, begins with painting—of the rudest kind, no doubt, but still inherited, as to its technique and methods, from the earliest Greek ages. It was inherited in decadence, even in degradation, and seldom practised with much skill by Christian hands; but it was made a medium of instructive symbolism and practical teaching, while it had this very great effect in favour of the arts, that it filled the people—in fact the masses of the Roman population—with new interest in the graphic language, and

taught them once more to look to Art as representing great spiritual facts in which they were deeply concerned here and hereafter. The sepulchral nature of this early Christian work connected it with all previous thought about the dead. In the Christian cemetery, as in those of old Etruria some account in emblem and mystery, some ideas of truth undefined and undetailed, were given men of the hereafter. The new belief or superstition had many new words to say to anxious heathen ; and some it said at the last end of life, amounting to promises of pardon, restoration, resurrection of the body. Our last chapter has brought us down to the construction of the catacomb, by the example of the early tomb of the Scipios, which exactly illustrates it. We know from Pompeian and other Gentile paintings a good deal of the state of wall-painting and colour-ornament down to the catacomb period, and we now come to deal with the places and pictures themselves.

Much has been said with great justice and to little effect on the unsatisfactory results of severing the ideas of construction and decoration, and setting architect against artist. Architecture, painting, or sculpture cannot be independent or at variance, and the sure and only remedy is to unite the knowledge of construction and ornament in every thoroughly-trained architect. But with regard to the Christian use of painting, its connection with architecture is very different from the relations of sculpture in the same direction. For architecture determines many conditions of sculpture, but Christian painting began where there was no architecture, or where the science of construction was not that of building but of burrowing : in fact, in the earliest Catacombs of Rome. The use of sepulchral painting in Italy is Etruscan ; belonging to that great component element of the Roman name which derives from Etruria ; and which, if left to itself, might have provided Rome after the second Punic war with a great school of her own. It would have done so but for the conquest of Greece, and general "conveyance," "collection," or plunder of her great works. All we have here to do with it is to remember its existence. For there is no doubt that Christian painting in the Catacombs is connected with old

Etrurian custom, based on the worship of forefathers, and that cultus of the dead which desired to make their dwellings like the houses of the living. We have already acknowledged the pure Greek elements of Christian art; the earliest Basilicas used by the Church were large halls in palaces like that of Pudens; and the Church was early accustomed to the usual decorations of such places, and learnt to adopt favourite images of Vine and Shepherd, and invest them with her own meaning. So far the Græco-Roman part of the Church. But it was in Roman nature also to paint the houses of the dead; so much so, that even the Synagogue of Rome yielded to her ancestral habit; and we find Jewish Catacombs of the first and second centuries ornamented like the others, though generally in a rather mournful and poverty-stricken style. But Christian congregations met either above ground or under ground; the Christian Basilica, from the peace of the Church, represents the Church or Temple of worship and Sacraments; while the Catacomb or Confessio, or family tomb, had their own services and their own ornamentation. This had to consist almost entirely of colour; for sculpture was partly forbidden, partly unattainable, and with architecture they had nothing to do. And the difference between the under-ground and above-ground colour was infallibly that in the Basilica colour was seen by light from without, in the catacombs only by light from within. The first possessed windows, and began¹ to ornament them with transparent hues, through which the outer light was transmitted. The second had to use colours which only reflected the wild or feeble light of faint lamps and torches in the depths of the Granular Tufa. And this difference affects our Church decoration to the present day, and often involves us in much difficulty; since people generally wish to have both mosaics and stained glass in church, and cannot make up their minds which shall take the lead, by superior richness of colour; and the only thing to be said is that one or the other must take precedence, because both cannot.

¹ As early as Prudentius; Peristeph. xii. 53, 54. See Labarte's *Handbook of Arts of the Middle Ages*, c. ii. p. 66. English translation.

As to the antiquity of the catacombs;¹ as to their very generally or almost entirely Christian origin; as to the important and decisive differences between the catacomb and the arenaria, or sand-pit; as to the infrequent instances and difficult expensive works by which an arenaria could be made useful as a catacomb; as to the peculiar strata of soil adapted for these cemeteries, called granular tufa, a dry, friable stone midway between the puzzuolana sandstone, which was too soft for the purpose, and the lithoid tufa, which was too hard; as to the way of beginning a catacomb by excavating a passage all round your lot of ground and driving galleries across and across; as to table-tombs, arcosolia, luminaria, ambulacra, and cubicula, all this is accessible in one view, and with equal fulness and accuracy, in the late lamented Mr. Wharton Marriott's article on "Catacombs" in Smith's new *Dictionary of Christian Antiquities*, which is very generally accessible.

Mr. Parker's photographs are the best or final authority for the present state of cemeteries. They fully confirm the accuracy of Bosio, the pioneer of all subterranean inquiry in Rome,² though too many paintings have perished since his time. As we shall see, an even more grievous destruction began at a far earlier date. Re-touchings and re-paintings have been various and lamentable; there have been many removals or attempts to remove pictures and inscriptions, to the destruction of precious records, or the loss of half their historical value. For example, the most ancient Christian inscription known which bears a consular date, is of

¹ The word catacomb is, in the first instance, the old local name of a single well-known cemetery (*ad catacumbas*) applied to all others as a generic term. It was situated near the Porto S. Sebastiano, and the relics of S. Peter and S. Paul were supposed to have lain there. (Anastasius, Hadrian, I. § 343; also Nicolaus I. § 601.) The etymology seems to be *κατά* and *κρυβή*—the latter being the Greek form of a very widely-spread root, *coom*, *coomb*, from which our own word *comb* is derived, meaning any hollow thing or place. In our own language hell is thus connected with hole or hollow.

² Bosio's plates, published in his *Roma Sotterranea*, 1632, are repeated in Aringhi's Latin *Roma Subterranea* (1651-9), and were again reproduced by Bottari in his *Sculture e pitture sagre*, &c., 1737-54. Marchi and De Rossi, with Dr. Northcote's translation of the latter, are standard authorities, with Perret's splendid French work.

the third year of Vespasian, A.D. 72, but its original locality is unknown (Northcote, *Roma Subterranea*, p. 65). Indeed even Seroux d'Agincourt is said to have incurred some blame for rash removals. Then some catacombs are forgotten or inaccessible, and it is even thought that others still exist unknown and perhaps undespoiled, with riches, as we trust, reserved for a generation which will preserve them *in situ*.

Between the photographs, Bosio's plates, and De Rossi's coloured illustrations, which fairly represent the usual greens, reds, and browns of the original works, a fair idea of the catacomb pictures may be obtained in any large library. D'Agincourt may suffice by himself to careful students of his plates, and there is an excellent abridged translation, published by Messrs. Longman about thirty years ago. One of the most interesting objects I remember in the French Exhibition of 1867 was a full-sized model of an interior of an ambulatory or gallery, with a cubiculum, or chapel, and its *arcosolia* or vaulted tombs ; but what became of it I know not.

Dean Milman's observation is often quoted, that at least the first two centuries of the Latin Church were entirely Greek, as to language spoken, written, and read in the Holy Scriptures ; as to organisation, and ritual, and, in fact, in all respects. It has an important bearing on the catacomb paintings, and on those in other Christian churches ; and it is emphasised by the curious fact we learn from Sozomen, the historian, that for the first two centuries there was no public preaching in Rome. Nor this only, but as all nations met in Rome, converts of all languages would then frequently meet in the Christian Churches ; and this would certainly stand in the way of any long addresses. But if these were rare, there must have been catechising or exposition, at special times and places in the cemeteries, or above ground in times of safety. Now no better aid to instruction can well be imagined than that Scriptural cycle of illustrations of the Old and New Testament, which, as all agree, occupied Christian art for the first three or four centuries. It is probable that the earliest pictures represented the Lord's own Figure of Himself as the Good Shepherd and the True Vine ; but next after these certainly come such pictures of type and

antitype, Old Testament and New, as are found with them in the Catacomb of S. Domitilla, of Nereus and Achilles, and of S. Callixtus.*

Such pictures, with comparatively few words in the language of the audience, would convey to Italian or barbarian converts the real meaning of their connection with the Old Testament and the Jewish covenant; and this, too, enables one to understand how Hebrew objections to the use of pictures were easily waived with respect to these. Indeed, as has been said, the Jewish Catacombs, identified by the seven-branch candlesticks and other obvious tokens, are illustrated with flowers and leaves, peacocks and other birds.

The use of pictures to convey information or teach doctrine made the church walls, as Professor Ruskin says of S. Mark's of Venice, literally as the pages of an illuminated MS. The quaint, bright pictures in these latter were for use quite as much as for ornament; they made it much easier to spell out the meaning of a written text. Those who shudder at the barbarity of our forefathers who could not read, may understand that reading was a much more difficult matter in early times of MSS. with their various hands and multiform abbreviations, than in our days of uniform printing and uniform lettering. Hand, characters, and contractions vary quite endlessly from grand uncials and Roman capitals, down to Gothic cursive or Merovingian grotesque-letters; and the pithy pictures, which always tell their tale so straight-forwardly, were useful to bishops and kings. In presence of the wall-paintings, in earlier days, the proper passages of Holy Scripture would be read to the catechumens, in Greek and in their own languages: and some short exposition would follow. It is very important to consider how the special passages which connect the Old Testament with the New, and to which S. Peter in his first preaching appealed (as indeed the Lord Himself had done), are set forth in symbol in these wall-pictures, as certain means of supplying the deficiencies of speakers in a foreign tongue. They are Greek, like everything in the early or Græco-Roman Church. Of course we

* As Moses and the rock, Daniel and the lions, David with his sling, and Jonah, very frequently; and in the New Testament the Miracles of Mercy.

mean Greek in the old or classical sense, not the Byzantine, which did not in fact exist for four centuries afterwards. But the curious thing is that late in the seventh century, when all art at Rome had fallen into utter degradation, Greece or the Eastern Empire seems to have instructed her again from Byzantium, and there was apparently a *Schola Græca* in Rome which did some new mosaics, and many early restorations in paint or inlaying, as in the well-known Catacomb and Baptistery of S. Pontianus; and so once again, in the wreck of the Empire as in its rise, "skill won favour." And in a different way, the greatness and constructive genius of Rome also prevailed over conquerors as savage as her own ancestors or their she-wolf. It is not only a pious reflection once in a way, that the Roman Empire, though it became the most pagan of all systems, prepared the way for the Christian Faith. Those who have time to consider what the Faith inherited from the Empire; what great elements of ancient civilisation the faith adopted in mass what and how much, in fact, all Christian races have learned from ancient Rome, will soon see what vast means of teaching and culture have come to us from heathen hands. To a great extent it is true that Scipio and Cæsar and Cicero laboured, and we have entered into their labours. Take only the system of law, and these few lines from the present Dean of S. Paul's, who, like his predecessor, has made return to old Rome for her past benefits:—

"So grew up, slowly and naturally, through many centuries, in the way familiar to us in our law, the imposing and elaborate system of scientific jurisprudence which the Romans, when they passed away, bequeathed to the coming world; the great collections of Theodosius and Justinian, in which are gathered the experiences of many ages of Roman society, played upon, illuminated, analysed, arranged by a succession of judicial intellects of vast power and consummate accomplishment; that as yet unequalled monument of legal learning, comprehensive method, and fruitfulness in practical utility, which, under the name of civil law, has been the great example to the world of what law may be, which has governed the jurisprudence of great part of Europe; which has influenced

in no slight degree our own jealous and hostile English traditions, and will probably influence them still more. 'The education of the world in the principles of a sound jurisprudence,' says Dean Merivale, 'was the most wonderful work of the Roman conquerors.'"

Well, law of society is of Rome, and she got early lessons in it from Athens, in the twelve tables. Grammar is law of articulate speech, and we get it from Greece through Rome. Architecture is the law of fit and beautiful construction, sculpture and painting the laws of form and colour; and all this we get from Greece through Rome. We have the language of the New Testament from Greece; and the Peace of Rome (*Pax Romana*), the order which Rome kept in the world, secured it a hearing in the world. Rome herself, in the early ages of decadence, speaks through law alone; for the last remnants of poetry and art belong to her early Church, which was Old-Greek, and their first and faintest Renaissance to the Byzantine-Greek of Constantinople. Nevertheless, whether from the eastern or the western capital of the empire, civilisation came to the north also; and as far as art is concerned, the ineradicable character of classical law (or method, or doctrine, or teaching) is seen in Scoto-Irish, Northumbrian, Saxon, and Swedish MSS. Then at last the fully prepared Renaissance based itself on the study of Greek language and art, with pre-eminent success and glory in Florence; and the Greek Testament was published in Germany and England.¹

The subterranean architecture, so to call it, of the Catacombs would naturally have round arches and vaults, as the work of excavation proceeded in cavernous forms. These vaults would be roughly divided out into geometrical forms, and adorned with subjects in compartments; and the place being one of Christian sepulture, Christian ideas of death, the resurrection, and the Lord of Life and Death would necessarily supply the most frequent subjects. Historical pictures of events in Holy Scripture came perhaps somewhat later; the great first example of them being the Old Testament mosaics in the Liberian Basilica, or *Sta. Maria Maggiore*

¹ See also Bryce's *Holy Roman Empire*, ch. xv. p. 264, ed. 1866.

at Rome. I have never been able to understand why modern artists have taken so little interest in scriptural motives, or have followed each other in repeating the same subjects so very often. People have copied each other in all ages, or been led by traditional methods and purposes. It seems possible that the intense interest of the Gospel-history should have inspired an early Church Angelico or a primitive Giotto. However, it was not so; the fear of idolatry stood in the way till the sixth century, and then idolatry itself cared nothing for historic or instructive pictures, always wanting miraculous portraits and frescoes attributable to angels. The decline and fall of the Roman Empire was to proceed, and to accomplish its appointed desolations, which included the loss of all the arts. When they reappeared it was in modified forms, and these the modern world is rather occupied in distinguishing, than in tracing to any common source or rudiment. Greek and Gothic, Athenian and Florentine architecture are not so much opposed to each other as our Greek or Gothic architects; much less so than the phrenzied followers on either side. The constructive principle is the same in both, to build a house to one's mind, and suitable to one's wants; the decorative study was the same in both, the observation of beautiful features of nature. The moderns have not yet learnt that you do not imitate an original man by copying his works, so much as by doing as he did, and learning as he learned. Then what you do will be in natural and true relation to your purpose; different, perhaps, from his in appearance, but like his in original adaptation or inventiveness.

Let us go back to the condition of a Christian Church or congregation, in Rome or Naples, where the largest systems of catacombs are found.¹ They would meet above ground in times of peace, and wherever they could in tolerable safety;

¹ It should be mentioned that the subterranean cemeteries of Syracuse, called the Grottos of S. John, and perhaps connected with the ancient *Latomix*, were visited by D'Agincourt, who describes them as of immense size—that there is a Saracen Catacomb near Taormina, with ambulacra twelve feet wide, and loculi or graves at right angles, and not parallel with them; that there are other pagan tombs of this character in Egypt; and that a small Christian catacomb has lately been discovered at Alexandria. I remember seeing traces

and certainly in the cemeteries while active persecution was going on. That some catacombs were used as places of refuge is a certainty, not only from the arrangements for water supply, &c. &c., but even from disguised exits, entrances, galleries ending abruptly between different floors (where ladders were evidently kept below, and only produced on some proper signal), and other means of escape. Here catechumens would receive instruction, and hear exhortation at leisure ; and symbolic representations of some kind would be found, if not necessary, at least extremely useful. There were undoubtedly both Jewish and heathen catacombs ; and we often find heathen or secular ornament in undoubtedly Christian cemeteries, as heathen phrases appear in Christian inscriptions. Indeed, it seems certain that heathens were occasionally laid to rest among Christian brethren. Separation in the grave must have been one, and not the least, of the distresses of divided houses, where some members accepted the faith and others continued heathen or unconvinced, and the enormous space occupied by the burial-vaults of Christian Rome show how searching the distinction became, in many families, between non-Christians, and those who gave up Gentile modes of burial, or changed from the use of cremation to that of Christian interment. The total length of the ambulacra or galleries is vaguely calculated at from 300 to 900 miles. Dr. Mommsen gives a better notion of extent by saying that they are not surpassed by the whole system of the Cloacæ of Republican Rome, while he emphatically insists on their being "the work of that community which S. Paul addressed in his Epistle to the Romans." Heathen burial did take place ; but still burning was the heathen rule, and burial the Christian. And the Church pressed the principle of common burial also, so that all holders of the faith might lie together, and the ecclesia or assembly of the faithful be continued in death. So that the cultus of deceased ancestors, the hearth or household worship

of loculi in the sandstone there as long ago as 1859. The Neapolitan catacombs are cut in a hard building-stone, and are on a larger scale, more like underground churches and halls. A beautiful picture of the Latomæ of Syracuse, by Mr. E. Lear, is now, I believe, in the possession of Earl Beauchamp.

which was perhaps the most genuine part of Roman religion, would have to be given up for all who lay among the Christians.

It was not only the Christian preference for burial, but the vast population of Rome, and the great conveniences of the softer kinds of tufa-stratum, which gave the subterranean system such a vast extension. As men had been crowded all through life in the high insulæ, or many-storied blocks of houses, so they lay range below range in their subterranean fields of sleep. The celebrated passage from S. Jerome about their terrors in the fourth century must have applied far more pitilessly to those who knew not of a resurrection of the dead.¹ But though Christians objected to burning, heathens had no objection to burial in itself, and in fact preferred it if possible. The Roman idea of what one may call sepulchral comfort was that a man should be buried in a corner of his own land. There his mausoleum, or *cella memoriæ*, was erected; there, if he were a heathen, the ancient rites of domestic worship and commemoration would be performed. If he were a Christian, the agape or love-feast would be celebrated there from time to time, and probably his mausoleum would become the entrance to a catacomb under his land, if the soil were the right granular tufa.

In the reign of Constantine, then, the catacomb-chapels were needed no longer as places of refuge, or for the liturgy of a Church, once persecuted, now rising to predominance. Memorial services in them no doubt continued; but what was of more importance, many associations connected with them were taken into the new Basilicas, and many ideas of the ages of persecution were there worked out. For though imperial persecution to death was over, suffering was not; and perhaps

¹ In *Ezech. xl.* (*circa* A.D. 354). When I was young, and studying in Rome, I was in the habit, on Sundays, of visiting the graves of the apostles and martyrs, and often did we enter those vaults which are excavated deep in the earth, where the bodies of the buried are seen in the walls on each side of the visitors, and all is so dark that the words of the prophet seem literally fulfilled—"Let them go down quick into hell"; where the gloomy darkness is seldom broken by any glimmer from above, whilst the light appears to come through a slit (*luminare*) rather than through a window, and you take each step with caution, as, surrounded by deep night, you recall the words of Virgil, "Terrors appal thee thoroughly, above all, terrible stillness."

enough has been said about the increasing distresses of the dying civilisation of Rome and the world. The willing expectation of death and of the Lord's coming, whether to all souls or the individual soul, continued to express itself; and chiefly by loving and admiring the memory of those who had gone before. The martyr's tomb had already taken the form of the cemetery Altar, in its typical shape of a table-tomb, with a half vault or arcosolium hollowed out above it. The great Basilica, perhaps occupied by the Church from heathen purposes, was a sign of her triumph; but the martyrs' graves represented her strength, the power which had won the triumph. Now, of course, the most important of the changes made in a "converted" Basilica would be those connected with the Altar. The apse of the Basilica would be a thoroughly convenient place either for it, or for the bishop's throne behind it, and the seats of the presbytery; as in the Duomo of Torcello (*Stones of Venice*, vol. ii.). Where the old classical or heathen arrangement was retained, *i.e.*, where the position of the heathen altar of the Basilica was kept for the Christian one—which probably did not often happen—there would be a space and perhaps seats behind the Altar; but generally speaking it would be at the farthest recess of the apse itself, as in its earliest arrangement of arcosolium and table-tomb.

We have already seen how natural it was to excavate a half-dome in the tufa above the grave of any specially venerated person,¹ and to make the flat surface over his body an Altar of Celebration; or to go a step farther, and to cut a passage behind also; and the next thing was to ornament the surfaces thus formed with painting of symbolic or even indifferent subjects. And thus began the round-arch ornamentation of Romanesque, Early English, Northern, and other styles. The sarcophagus would be carved, or a marble tomb substituted, and the walls and arch or vault over it would be painted in compartments. Illustration and decoration were universal, and of inveterate habit in the Empire, and the Church accepted both quite frankly. No harm followed for

¹ See article "Catacombs" in Smith's *Dictionary of Antiquities*, or D'Agincourt, *Architecture*, pl. xiii.

centuries at least : and in the evil days, when Iconoclasm had become unavoidable, and a source of division and ruin, the real evil was not so much in the pictures themselves as in the changed and fallen faith of their worshippers. If there had been no painting or sculpture at all, the relics of saints would have been worshipped all the same. The evil was that the Church had lost the sense of communion with God in Christ. He had not rent His heavens and come to her in what seemed, and was, her great need. He seemed not to hear prayer, to be inaccessible, to require to be mediated with, rather than to be the ever-present, ever-interceding Advocate : and men began to set up images of the brethren, whom perhaps they had seen, to take the place of Him they could not see.

But in the Augustan and following ages (as any book of Pompeian or other archæology will show) all Gentile life was a gallery of pictures and sculpture, good, bad, indifferent, and omnipresent, from marble Apollos and tinted Aphrodites down to the sign-cloths, or "*inscripta lintea*," of taverns and gladiator-schools. And once more, let us get rid of the idea that early Church paintings were different from these, or anything like what we call Byzantine or Gothic. Roughly speaking, at this time there would be no Byzantine for 500 years ; and pointed Gothic certainly was not due for a thousand. If, which is impossible, any Christian of the first five centuries could have imagined such objects as early mediæval pictures, he certainly would not have wanted them in Church or elsewhere : and if he had, they would have given ground for Pagan accusations of strange witchcraft and abominable rites. The distinction between Christian and heathen was then absolute, a matter of heart and mind : and the expression, pagan ornament, as we use it now since the Renaissance, never could have been used in those days. It is the Renaissance which has somehow set classical work against Gothic, and correct drawing against Christianity. We used to have, and have still, a great many persons who are devoted to Gothic grotesque, and archaism : but without denying many merits and great value to the style they love, it is no use setting it up as exclusively the Christian

style. Keble Chapel is excellent, so is S. Domitilla's Cemetery, so is the Chapel of Galla Placidia; but the two latter are a good deal the oldest, and their ornamentation is classical. Real early Church work is too ancient for archaism. Just as in Gothic times men lived in Gothic houses, so in classic times they prayed in classically-adorned Churches; and very well the latter must have looked. The notion that all Gothic building is Christian, and all Christian building is Gothic, is an error which may yet cause a good deal of prejudice and quarrel.

A very brief history of the Catacombs is necessary, and that means for the most part an account of their despoiling and defacement. While we lament over the destructions of the Reformation in German and English Churches, let us take some of the following facts to heart, all perfectly undisputed, and equally matter of regret to Roman Catholics and Anglicans.¹

First, the Christian Catacombs, or the whole Catacomb system, practically speaking, was an enlarged development of the subterranean tomb, or vault, almost peculiar to Rome from the soil, which invited excavation. There is evidence of first century tombs for this. The usual method of construction was to secure a piece of ground on the right sort of granular tufa, so many feet in front, facing the road, so many deep *in agro*; to excavate a passage all round it, burying people in the walls as you went on; and then to drive galleries across as you wanted more graves. By the beginning of the third century the Christians of Rome are found in quiet possession of such a cemetery, to this day called the cemetery of Callixtus; besides the crypt of the Vatican, the tombs and catacombs of Domitilla, Prætextatus, and probably others. Then about half through the third century begins the period of regular imperial persecution, as distinguished from former outbreaks of popular violence and occasional severities, such as we know of in the celebrated correspondence of Pliny and Marcus Aurelius. Nero's in A.D. 65 may be excepted, as a general persecution; but Decius's (A.D. 249-51) and the

¹ See "Catacombs" and "Frescoes," articles in Smith's *Dictionary of Christian Antiquities*.

still more terrible one of 303, under Galerius and Diocletian, are the two foci of affliction. To these times we may trace the secret entrances and egresses, the hidden staircases, &c. (Northcote *R. S.* pp. 331, 347), and perhaps the filling and earthing-up of many of the galleries. That martyrs were buried, and that martyrdoms took place in the Catacombs are facts beyond a shadow of a doubt; there is no question of Fabianus Bishop of Rome's martyrdom in 251, or that he was buried in the crypt of the Vatican. Xystus was certainly slain with his four deacons in the cemetery of Prætextatus; and a large number of the faithful were walled up and suffocated together in a catacomb on the Salarian way.

Towards the middle of the fourth century, as the Faith became the established religion of Rome, fewer subterranean burials took place; and it would seem, by Jerome's words about his schoolboy visits to the cemeteries, that by 354 they were quite disused. But "the zeal displayed by Pope Damasus from 366 to 384 in repairing and decorating them, caused a short outburst of desire to be buried near the hallowed remains, resulting in wholesale destruction of many hundreds of early paintings from the cubacula and arcosolia." This died away; and after the dread year of Alaric in 410 no certain case of interment in them is recorded. Then came the second sack of Rome in 457, and Vitiges in 537; in the former the Catacomb churches were in all probability plundered; and certainly in the latter. The Lombards in 956 found little left to destroy; for the great religious spoliation of the eighth century, highly excusable as it seemed at the time, took the attention of the devout entirely away, and the pilgrims, for whom the paintings had been kept up and renewed, had ceased to frequent the cemeteries. The names of Paul I. (c. 761) and Paschal (817-827) are specially connected with the translation of relics from them. Their existence seems to have been forgotten for six centuries, till they were accidentally discovered on May 31, 1578.

It may sound Puritanic, anti-æsthetic (or is anæsthetic the proper adjective?), but whatever may be thought of it, it must be said that there is grave cause for regret that the subjects of Church decoration and symbolism have not been

- limited in all times to the Biblical cycle of the Catacombs. The primitive Church only represented or symbolised the words and work of God on her walls. His saints were represented ; but as characters in historical pictures, as vessels of His Spirit commissioned by Him to act or speak, as saints doing something, not merely standing in glory to be adored with, or instead of, Him. It is to be wished that our own Church buildings should observe the primitive restriction. It is mere nonsense to say the Old and New Testament
- would not supply noble subjects to believing painters, even to all time ; and if Church-painting is to be considered a serious matter, and a part of Christian instruction (and not mere art-work, in which case it has no business in Church at all), it ought to be used under the regulations of other instruction. We do not read the legends of saints from the eagle ; we ought not to have legends painted on walls or windows. The fact is, our whole religious use of the arts requires a good deal of regulation ; for between singing and ceremonial, mosaics and windows, flowers and banners, candles and embroidery, the Christian soul seems to have too many pretty things to attend to ; and both the deep abstraction of prayer from the heart, and true unanimity of spirit in our common service, are a great deal more interrupted than they used to be in less æsthetic days.

CHAPTER II.

THE SCRIPTURAL CYCLES OF THE CATACOMBS.

THE observation was made at the end of our last chapter that it might have been better if our subjects of Church decoration and symbolism had been limited to the Biblical Cycle of the Catacombs, or at all events to subjects taken from Holy Scripture. Between historical paintings of events and symbolic illustrations of doctrine; between representations of facts symbolic in themselves, and imaginations of the foretold things that shall be—it seems that such limitation would not be too narrow for the invention of the painter; and that the mind of the worshipper would not be led into danger of wandering too far from Church service, or the theme of his meditations; in the congregation or by himself. Such restrictions are, I suppose out of the question, like all other control in these days; but it ought to be always remembered that they were the natural and general order of the first four centuries. Almost all the rules we know of as the XXXVI. Canon of the Council of Elvira, were restrictive and against pictures, rather than in their favour; and by Eusebius's confiscation of the embroidered curtain at Anablatha it seems that no distinction was made at first between coloured work on the flat and relieved sculpture. The Church by no means invented decoration of any kind; but had to adopt it as a matter of course, because nine rooms out of ten in a dwelling-house were decorated; and every tomb in a cemetery had its device, even in the Hebrew Catacombs, where one would have thought both poverty and religion would interpose prohibition. To

the Pauline or Gentile school of converts the graven or painted images were nothing at all—insignificant in the literal sense. It was not worth while to notice whether walls were painted or not, when such grave things were heard and done within them. I have been many years interested in Church decoration, but it has always seemed to me that those have best learned to appreciate it who remember that it is, after all, a matter of no great importance by comparison.

The transition from purely ornamental to significant decoration was easily made, of course ; but it seems to have been made gradually, and in some instances it scarcely took place at all. For example, the chapel or cubiculum of the Ocean, in the Callixtine Catacomb, takes its name from a large head of Oceanus, which is in the centre of the vaulted roof. The remainder of the roof, with the walls, is done in rectilinear panels, with subjects in their centres, exactly as in Pompeii, and the date of the whole lies somewhere in the third century ; but the subjects are all birds (the peacock in particular), flowers, and flying genii. And in another chamber (*De Rossi*, vol. i. pl. x.) Orpheus occupies the centre above, surrounded by dishevelled genii, and supported by eight oblong panels ; two Shepherds, two female Orantes, and four genii bearing crooks. The walls are covered with arabesques, combining doves, peacocks, and other birds, with dolphins and sea-monsters.

But one unmistakably Christian emblem seems to decide the character of all. The Lamb is there, bearing the Bread ; and the whole may be an instance of highly symbolic painting, with implied meanings, sacred to the brethren, though apparently trivial to the unbeliever. It may have been done in dubious or threatening times, when Pagan workmen had to be employed, or had access to the cemetery. Perhaps the two best examples of very early ceilings, with full Christian ornament, are in the tomb of S. Domitilla, in her cemetery on the Appian Way, and the chapel of S. Callixtus, in his Catacomb. Both have a special characteristic of the earliest ornament, in being partly adorned with landscapes, and entirely subject to decorative system. And, as Canon Venables observes,¹

¹ "Fresco," *Smith's Dictionary of Christian Antiquities*, p. 693.

both possess the cheerfulness of the first Christian work. The artists may not have been Christians, but have executed subjects to order in their own style; at all events, allowing for some roughness or hurry of execution, the work is like other second, or even first-century work. "There are the same geometrical divisions of the roof," says the Dean of Chichester,¹ "the same general arrangement of the subjects, the same fabulous animals, the same graceful curves, the same foliage, fruit, flowers, and birds; only that the Good Shepherd, or some Scriptural subject, as Jonah or Daniel, or some unmistakable symbol, is there to clear up doubt as to the religion of the art before us."

Still, it is clear that in the earliest time Christian people looked on death with great happiness, as the door of eternal life. It must be remembered that persecution was, at all events, sporadic, and that in Rome it was often, and for long intervals, intermitted. There seems to have been no regular or imperial cruelty from Nero's onslaught to the time of Decius; so that although pictures of martyrdoms certainly existed,* there were probably very few before the latter half of the third century. The earliest pictures yet speak of a time when Christians put ornamentation in its proper order of importance—that is to say, as a subsidiary means of expressing what they had in their hearts. It was intended that all should dwell on the same ideas and beliefs, held with joy and faith in substance, and prior to formulation; and that men of all nations and languages meeting in a cemetery service should know, and confess to each other without words, the Lord as their common Shepherd and the Vine of their souls. The days of extreme affliction from without, and of yet more searching inner dissension, were not yet come; nor was the time arrived which Eusebius (*Eccl. Hist.*, bk. viii., ch. i.) so touchingly acknowledges to have preceded the greater and fiery trials of his days, "when by reason of our full liberty our ways (τὰ καθ' ἡμᾶς) fell into vanity and sloth, some envying and reviling others in different ways; when we ourselves

¹ *Letters from Rome*, p. 250. Northcote, p. 190.

* Prudentius (A.D. circa 405) of S. Cassianus: *Historiam pictura refert*; and of the martyrdom of S. Hippolytus, *Peristeph. Hymn ix. v. 5 and xi. v. 141 sq.*

were almost at open war with each other, if occasion took place ; and prelates were falling foul of prelates, and people all in faction against people ; and unspeakable hypocrisy and disguise of thought were drawing towards extreme of wickedness."

The first and second centuries were the spring sowing of the word ; and for a time it grew with little molestation, before the burning of summer and thick undergrowth of thorns.

The cemetery of S. Domitilla is Professor Mommsen's chosen example of an ancient burial chamber, and of the development of such a tomb into a regular Catacomb ; either by extension underground, or by other subterranean additions, till a Catacomb was established. Its primitive name is after its foundress or first occupant, and it has since borne the names of SS. Petronilla, Nereus, and Achilles. S. Domitilla was, in fact, a grand-daughter of Vespasian ; a heathen inscription, says Professor Mommsen, mentions her as the donor of the crypt ; and dated tiles found in it belong to the times of Hadrian and Antoninus Pius, 117-161. The former date is just twenty-one years from the death of Domitian in 96 ; and the year 95 is marked in Christian history as the year of the death of a Christian consul. This was T. Flavius Clemens, Domitilla's husband. He may have been a man of too retiring or indolent a character ; but I should not think, after Juvenal's Fourth Satire about the "last Flavius" (Domitian), that any kinsman of his was far wrong in keeping out of the way while he could. At all events, Flavius Clemens undoubtedly underwent death for atheism and Jewish superstition, as a Christian martyr (Suetonius, *Domit* : 15, and Dion Cassius, lxxvii. 14) ; and was contemptuously spoken of by Heathendom in consequence. By some he is thought to be Clemens Romanus himself, Bishop of Rome at the end of the first century, and it is quite possible. He died, and Domitilla was sent after his death to the island of Ponza, where she probably ended her days in exile. The rooms she occupied there, says Mommsen, were still visited by pious persons in the fourth century. Nereus and Achilles are said to have been members of her household. Her own tomb, or the special crypt of her bestowing, still retains some

of its original frescoes, of which the Vine on the ceiling is the most beautiful; but Noah, and Daniel, the Dove and the Good Shepherd, with an Agape, are on the walls, and are pronounced by the Professor to be of the same date. The Chapel of Callixtus has Daniel (he stands between the lions in both instances), with Moses and the Rock, Lazarus, and David with his sling.

A proper list of the Old and New Testament Cycles of pictures in the Catacombs is given by Canon Venables (Smith's *Dictionary*, "Fresco," p. 700), and he refers to a most learned and comprehensive book, by the Danish Bishop, Dr. Fred. Münter, called *Sinnbilder u. Kunstvorstellungen der alten Christen*, Altona, 1825, which I beg to commend to all who can find it in libraries.

OLD TESTAMENT.

1. The Fall.
2. Offering of Cain and Abel.
3. Noah and the Dove.
4. Sacrifice of Isaac.
5. Moses removing his Shoes.
6. Moses and the Rock.
7. David with his Sling.
8. Elijah's Translation.
9. The Children in the Furnace.
10. Daniel in the Lion's Den.
11. Jonah {
 1. Swallowed.
 2. Disgorged.
 3. Under the Gourd.
12. Job on the Dunghill (much rarer).
13. Tobias with the Fish.
14. Susanna and the Elders.

NEW TESTAMENT.

1. Adoration of the Magi.
2. Miracle of Cana.
3. Christ and the Woman of Samaria.
4. The Paralytic: generally carrying his bed.
5. The Woman with the Issue.
6. Healing the Blind.
7. Loaves and Fishes Multiplied.
8. Raising of Lazarus.
9. Zacchæus.
10. The Entry into Jerusalem.
11. Christ before Pilate, who is washing his hands.
12. The Appearance at the Sea of Galilee—with bread and fish. Add.
13. The Annunciation. Bottari, tav. 176.
14. Our Lord's Baptism. Cat. of S. Pontianus.
15. The Five Wise Virgins. Cat. of S. Agnes.

N.B.—A Dispute with the Doctors, in the Callixtine Catacomb.

Most of these are described in the catalogue raisonné at the end of Primitive Church Art. There are some observations to be made on several of them, which are not in that book, and which seem to be desirable additions here. Besides, there is more to say of the two or three subjects originally

prescribed, as it were, by Our Lord—of the Vine, the Good Shepherd, the Lamb of God, and the Sheep of the Church : the Dove as symbolising the Holy Spirit and the faithful ; the anagrammatic IXΘΥΣ, or Fish, which represents Our Lord ; and the smaller Pisciculi, the Faithful within the Church's net. Then we may say something about miscellaneous, or rare, paintings in the Catacombs. Almost all the above-mentioned are of frequent, and many of constant occurrence ; they may be considered as current symbolisms of the earliest times, used by Christian priests and people, from a time when the distinction between laity and clergy was not strictly drawn or resolutely formulated. These images conveyed the Lord's history, the chief part of His teaching concerning Himself and the Holy Spirit ; and were, besides, the key to the Typical Persons and Events of the Old Testament. With proper explanations they may have formed—in Rome at least—something like a catechism of instruction ; the then “institution” of a catechumen preparing for Baptism, or under instruction afterwards. They may have been used as a secret language of religious doctrine and history ; but, besides this, they appealed to the Christian understanding at sight, by a common speech ; as if men really heard in their own tongues the wonderful works of God. Besides, they conveyed ideas old and new to the mind, with all the pleasantness of quickly-understood symbolism, and the fresh, sharp outline of graphic teaching. Colour and form are always something ; and all the world over it is a pleasure to look at a picture and see what it means.

There were reasons why the Good Shepherd, with the Vine, should be the first decorative images of which the Church made use. The earliest mention of such an image is in Tertullian, *De Pudicitia*, c. vii. and x., of a relief on an eucharistic chalice. These two were the readiest to hand and least suspected ; as vines and shepherds were a favourite subject of ornament everywhere. Our chapter on Sculpture may be so far anticipated here by reference to Raoul Rochette for the two types of the Good Shepherd, and the derivation of one of them ; in which

¹ See note, next page.

He bears the lost sheep on His shoulders. That is copied from an ancient Tanagræan statue, called Hermes Criophorus, the Rambearer (see also Pausanias, ix. 22, 2). In Seeman's *Götter and Heroën* there is a woodcut of the original, by Calamis, and among Parker's *Photographs* is a beautiful heathen shepherd from the tomb of Statilius Taurus (Nos. 3304-3316). The Bearer of the Sheep, as may be supposed, is the favourite Christian type. The Good Shepherd never was a favourite subject in the Eastern Church. I can find no satisfactory reason why; unless Greek feelings were hurt by its resemblance to the perhaps well-known Hermes Criophorus. The latest Shepherd known is a bas-relief in the Campo Santo at Pisa. He bears one sheep, and directs the wanderings of others. All go before Him the same way, but one stumbles and falls. The resemblance to the Hermes struck Bottari as well as Raoul Rochette.¹ The other form develops into the Royal or Beautiful Shepherd, as in the great mosaic of Galla Placidia's Chapel; and there, and in the Catacombs, connects the image of the Shepherd with Orpheus. The connection is very ancient, and easy enough to understand, and it is no wonder if the Church early adopted it. There are other examples of it in the Callixtine, besides that already mentioned,² which is on the cover of Smith's *Christian Antiquities*, and at page 696. The Eastern, at least Phrygian, cap and "anaxyrides" or trousers, are to be remarked, as referring Orpheus to the East; they remind us of the dress of the Three Kings in most early paintings and sculptures. I have often thought that the similitude of Orpheus as tamer of all wild creatures was connected, in the Christian mind, with the Lord's promise to draw all men unto Him. Men certainly were ready at a very early date to look on the myths of Greek poetry and philosophy in the light of the Gospel. In one of the Callixtine Orpheuses the camel, horse, lion, and peacock are chief among the animals present; and a snake, with lizards and several small birds, generally occur. This way of dwelling, with variations as it were, on the original theme of the Lord's similitude of Himself, may be

¹ See the latter, *Tableaux des Catacombes*, p. 162.

² Bottari, vol. i. *Tav.* lxiii. and vol. ii. *Tav.* lxxi.

fanciful and Neo-Platonic, in connecting Him with Greek story ; but there may have been a better reason why Christian Greeks liked it, as it ministered to ideas of charity and hope for Gentile forefathers, who might be thought to have looked, though only in mystic figure, to the coming Redeemer and Shepherd of mankind. In fact the earlier habit of Christianising the myths seems always related to the habit of indulging Christian hope of the salvation of the fathers.¹

There is not much more to be said of the numberless illustrations of the Vine, except that as it is constantly represented from the first century to the Renaissance, it is the best example by which the draughtsman, or antiquary accustomed to judge of drawing, can form an idea of successive dates of pictures.² We could make out many stages, as the early naturalism of S. Clement's mosaics, and S. Domitilla's Vine ; then the slight conventionalism of *Prætextatus*,³ and the great Callixtine : then the severer circular composition of the beautiful second-century stuccoes of the Latin Way, with naturally drawn grapes and boys (Bottari, ii. *Tav.* 93, and also P. Marchi).⁴ Then in the chapel of Galla Placidia we come to complete conventionality, and a beautiful close pattern, which would do admirably for any modern chancel, Romanesque, Byzantine, or Pointed, unless we stand in awe of the Pharisaism of architectural purists. But then we have the probably sixth-century Vine of Torcello,⁵ and the blue and white mosaic of S. Mark's, I suppose about the twelfth ; and the beautiful coloured spandril—all illustrated by Professor Ruskin in *Stones of Venice*, vol. ii. During the Renaissance the Vine lost its Christian signification, and was treated artistically, till Titian transferred the whole subject to the Bacchic orgie.

¹ The description in Philostratus, junr., c. 6, of a picture of Orpheus answers almost exactly to that described above.

² Vine of *Prætextatus* Catacomb, Parker, No. 1822 (vol. xii.), and book on the Catacombs, Via Appia, plate i. Construction of entrance-wall of time of Nero. Woodcut in De Rossi's *Bulletino di Archaeologia Christiana*. *Prætextatus* is a surname, not a gentile name ; no doubt a Roman family bore it, but there seems not to have been any *Saint* *Prætextatus*.

³ Smith, p. 695 ; Bottari, t. i. *Tav.* 74 ; an *arcosolium*.

⁴ *Tav.* xxii., *Monumenti delle Arti Cristiane*. Rome, 1844.

⁵ The columns must belong to the original edifice.

Titian meant no harm : he was a good Christian according to his lights. It is not easy, even in Holy Scripture, to set the contradictory associations of the Vine over against each other. There are happy natural images of vine and fig-tree, and the fatness of the vine, and the fruit that delights God and man, to oppose to the vineyard of Israel, cut down and rooted up, and to the judgment between the Lord and His Vine. All ends in the dread vision of the Apocalypse, of the angel with his sharp sickle, reaping the clusters of the vine of the earth, to cast them into the winepress of the wrath of God. And it has often been noticed, in different points of view and with various application, how Our Lord's parable of the Vine united the ideas of fertility, natural beauty, and richness, with the fate of barren branches taken away from the stock, and fruitful ones pruned and purged by suffering, that they may bear yet more. The fact is, these similitudes, as old as the world, point out and bear witness to the way of God with man since the beginning of the world. The Renaissance would only look at the pleasant side, as the monastic Church had only looked at the side of suffering ; Titian had many excuses and many companions, and was one of the best among them. But his time does unquestionably indicate the final severance of the traditional connection between art and religion ; and many since his time have done their best, or worst, to make severance into repulsion.

The Dove, as a symbolic manifestation of God the Holy Spirit, occurs in all paintings of our Lord's Baptism ; perhaps the earliest still in existence is the very well-known one in the Catacomb of S. Pontianus.¹ The Abbé Martigny assigns it to the sixth century. The catacomb in question possesses a spring, which was properly drained and collected in a cistern and chamber, and thus gave occasion for one of the earliest Baptistries. There is another in the Catacomb of S. Agnes, and Pope Damasus made a third in the Vatican cemetery. But the Dove is also used, as was said, to represent the Christian worshipper, and appears in countless instances on the tombs in the funereal cubicula. There are

¹ Aringhi, i. 381 ; Bottari, *Tav.* xliv. ; Marchi, pp. 32, 220-224, *Tav.* ii. and xlii.

beautiful ones in S. Domitilla, in the Callixtine, S. Prætextatus, and almost everywhere. The very numerous birds found on the inscriptions of Southern Gaul¹ seem often intended for doves. The train of thought is evidently that of Ps. lv. 6, of fleeing away to be at rest; and of course in many instances where the dove bears the palm, the victory of Christian death, by martyrdom or ordinary suffering, may be intended. Where the doves represent the living believer, the image seems to refer to Matt. x. 16—"Be ye wise as serpents, and harmless as doves."

But the commonest appearance of the Dove is with Noah. The earliest of these pictures are all like each other. Noah is always standing in the square arca, or chest, done in a style of perspective which makes one feel as if one had been examining a school in that subject. He wears a long tunic with stripes or clavi, and holds out his hand to the olive-bearing Dove. Thus he appears continually in various Catacombs; but the curious thing is, that this treatment and figure seem to be derived from a coin of the city of Apamæa in Phrygia, which was called *Κιβωτός*—arca, ark, or treasure-chest—from its being one of the great emporia of Asia Minor. It is a curious adaptation, naturally suited to the secret symbolism of earlier days; and no doubt conveyed the sense of preservation through the storms of this world to many anxious spirits. It is not often seen in mediæval sculpture, mosaic, or MSS., so as to be recognisable for the old quasi-Apamæan symbol. But it is found on one memorable and well-known relic, so well described and figured latterly in *Aratra Pentelici*—on the bronze doors of S. Zenone at Verona: and the difference of the work is remarkable. The square "arca" is changed into a kind of upright structure, like a table-altar with a raised back or reredos. Noah's head protrudes from a square hole in the latter, rather like a bearded Lombard; and the dove is drawn in the act of alighting—so well, that I cannot but fancy the artist had stretched out his fist to a hawk pretty often in his time. Or, if he was a Greek—as Lord Lindsay will have it, and I cannot think—he must have been criticised by some northern tamer of the

¹ Leblaut. *Inscrip. Chrétiennes de la Gaule*, &c.; Paris, 1856.

gyr-falcon. The sea, on which the ark floats, is very rough, and the whole seems to show the Lombard energy.

Some of the Old and New Testament examples, in Canon Venables' list, are found a good deal oftener in the sculptures on sarcophagi than in fresco-painting. This applies to the Fall, the Sacrifice of Isaac, and the Translation of Elijah, which is certainly derived in its treatment from classical sculptures of the Horses of the Sun. The Three Children, Daniel, and Jonah occur constantly in both pictures and carvings. The three generally stand in a regular furnace, like one intended for smelting metals; their hands are generally raised in prayer like *Orantes*—not clasped, but with extended arms. Daniel stands between two lions, often in the same attitude; and these two pictures in particular seem to have been meant to encourage those who might be called on to suffer in the name of Christ. This would account for their being so frequent in the earlier work of the cemeteries; as Jonah is the most commonly repeated of all, from being the chosen type of the Lord's Resurrection to all believers alike. The Raising of Lazarus and the Adoration of the Magi are also very common; the former as a fulfilment of the symbolic resurrection of Jonah, the latter probably as representing the first fruits of the Gentile Church. One great importance of the catacomb paintings is, that they give us an idea of what one may call the leading or current religious ideas of the time; of the thoughts about Death and themselves, and the Faith, on which Christian people were wont to dwell, before the Nicene Creed; before doctrines were yet defined for the people; while heresy was still in great part an imperfect comprehension of the truth, and before it had stiffened into sectarian defiance. These great images or notions were sufficient to fill the mind and formulate the hopes of the Christian soldier, or workman, or official, or slave, or curialis; and this latter class of men probably suffered as much as any, from the fourth century or earlier.

I cannot get it out of my head that the conditions of Christian city life in the middle or lower classes—the life without observation, of those who must absolutely accept the state of things around them, and work to the end under hard

conditions—what we call real or common life, in Roman decadence, had much in common with our modern English existence. The same crowded streets, tall, teeming houses, incessant din of traffic, love of excitement at any price, indifference in all classes as to the quality of excitement; the same general scepticism and absence of creed, with the same really sincere acknowledgment that religion is good and desirable, if one only could be religious; the same nucleus of believers, wilfully misunderstood by the public; the same sense of political power and impatience of taxation; and that burden always increasing, and gradually levelling all men downwards into poverty; the same daily anxiety for news from the other end of the world, and inevitable endless wars on every frontier—all this must have amounted, by the time one was forty or so, to an inexpressible distraction and weariness of heart, about all one's hopes, or prospects, or past or future existence. People in this outworn state of mind require pretty short views on all matters; it seems an almost hopeless thing to inspire such a race with new spiritual hopes, to teach them a new religion. Yet this the Gospel did for the town-populations of Rome, Antioch, and Alexandria; and it was done, humanly speaking, by applying to every heart, and making every soul partake in, such great broad ideas, instantly apprehended and never in this world comprehended, as are conveyed by these Catacomb paintings. Christ is God as well as Man, and the Shepherd of men. He is the Vine, and all men are parts of Him—Caius and Caia, Pudens the Senator and Claudia the fair Britoness, Glaucus and Ione of Athens, "Volero the fleshier and the strong smith Muræna," even all the Davuses of the slave-market—all we are one in Him; He is the Lamb, and He died as well as lived for all these. He died and rose from the dead, having foretold that He would do so, like the Hebrew Jonah. He gave sign of His power over death by recalling the shrouded Lazarus to life.¹ He may call upon His followers to die by fire for Him, and if He does so, He will be with the faithful; as with the Three Children and with Daniel; He was

¹ Lazarus is almost always represented as not only "bound hand and foot with grave-clothes," but rolled in linen bandages like an Egyptian mummy.

prepared for by the fathers of this strange Hebrew race. Thoughts of this kind, presented by rough art, would present themselves as realities to the mind of the Roman mechanic, or trader, or soldier; and each of them separately would be enough to throw a new light on the darkness of his spiritual prospects, and the monotony or base excitement of his worldly life. They would give him what many of us want—something to live for.

I believe some professor or other has fulminated about Christianity having destroyed Greek or Roman civilisation; and if civilisation means luxury, slavery, and degradation of women, why it did so. But there is no doubt that Christianity preserved a large part of the Roman population from despair for several centuries; and there is no doubt that without Christianity there would have been no Constantinople, no Eastern Empire, no bulwark against Oriental or Russian barbarism, no Gregory to intercede with the Lombards. All civilisation which survived the fall of Rome was either Christian in origin, or preserved by Christian hands; and the hold of Christianity on mankind was made fast through certain broad facts about mankind; which Christian teachers were empowered to tell them, and did tell them, through these paintings, and by other means. The Coliseum and its gladiators may to the agnostic mind convey a greater idea of civilisation than the Catacombs and their martyrs, but the latter prevailed after all.

The figure of Jonah, as a symbol of the Resurrection of the Body, is certainly the most frequently repeated of all the Catacomb pictures; and there may have been the other reason for its frequency from the earliest times, that it might be everywhere represented without attracting any particular attention, as passing for an illustration of classical mythology.¹ There was a Phœnician myth of Hercules swallowed by a whale, which Rochette quotes from Bottari, vol. iii. p. 42—sheltering himself with some caution under the elder and long-deceased writer's authority or impunity. Jason is said to be represented on an Etruscan vase, as going through the same process. The stories of Hesione and Andromeda were

¹ R. Rochette, *Tableaux des Catacombes*, p. 167 sq.

constant subjects for Roman and Greek ornament. There is a capital description of Hercules and Hesione in Philostratus' *Imagines*, ch. xii., which Charles Kingsley may have made use of in his *Andromeda* and in *The Heroes*: and it is really interesting to see to what perfection the rhetoricians had brought the art of pictorial inventory and composition in words—theme, main facts, accessories, and by-play. However, disregarding Philostratus, we may remark that it is very curious that so many traditions should surround the port of Joppa, or Jaffa—the Beautiful, as they may well call it—all reminding us more or less of Jonah. S. Jerome notices this in his 108th Epistle: "Joppa, too," he says, "the harbour of Jonah when he fled from God—and if I may make some allusion to the tales of poets, the town which witnessed the binding of Andromeda to her rock." And he says in his commentary on Jonah (c. 1) that the bones of Andromeda's sea-monster were still exhibited at Joppa in his time. Josephus had himself seen a link of her chain (*Bell. Judaic.* l. III. cviii. 3). Raoul Rochette is in some trouble because Pliny says that in his time these (cetaceous or other) remains had been transported to Rome, no doubt by some antiquarian of the school of Mummius and MacCribb. He cheerfully surmounts this apparent discrepancy between Pliny and S. Jerome (on this subject no doubt of almost equal authority) by supposing that another set of bones had been substituted; which is quite possible, as there are, proverbially, always as good fish in the sea as ever came out of it. It will be observed that classical relics or curiosities were no more authentic than mediæval; and it is gratifying to find archæology enriched with one more dragon. Mrs. Jameson's remark that the vast bones of supposed dragons, exhibited at Aix and elsewhere, were probably Saurian. "Dragons of the prime" will apply to these remains as well as others.

It is evident, of course, that all this has nothing to do with the Old Testament record, whatever construction we ought to put upon it; but it is curiously connected with the Catacomb pictures. Almost all of them represent the whale as a vast lacertine or serpentine creature, greatly resembling the mediæval and modern ideals of the sea-serpent. Traditions

of decorative monsters have much to do with this: and the painters, if Christians, evidently cared nothing about realising the narrative. in comparison with their real object, of pictorially repeating the Lord's words concerning His own Resurrection.

The Sea-monster, Dragon, or Balæna, then, engulfs or disgorges the prophet, on numerous walls and ceilings, in the manner usually expected of him. But there is a curious story and question connected with the third scene of Jonah's history, which the paintings seem entirely to determine. S. Jerome, for what reason we know not, but against the Septuagint version and in face of Augustine's opposition, reads, "*Præparavit Dominus hederam*" (ivy, not gourd), in Jonah, chap. iii. All these pictures are decidedly of a gourd-vine, with fruit like large cucumbers, and they show the general opinion of their time. It seems that S. Jerome's temper, naturally impatient of comment, was somewhat aroused by being reminded of this: at all events, he tells S. Augustine that if he altered "*hedera*" into "*cucurbita*," nobody would understand it; and that the Hebrews who require the alteration are probably liars. Aringhi excuses the Catacomb painters for unanimously preferring the gourd, because the Pope had not yet made the text of the Vulgate equivalent to actual and verbal dictation by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Father has made it so now, he says, and there is no more to be said about it. No more there is.¹

The fact is, these pictures were all so highly symbolic in the ideas they conveyed to their original painters and spectators, as to be simple hieroglyphics; almost like written words, which are arbitrary signs of objects, without resemblance to the objects they stand for. Persons well instructed in the Prophets and Gospels needed only a glance for the train of thought to be conveyed, and that was enough. Texts might as well have been written on the walls. Indeed, it seems that in our own day, if texts were ably illuminated on a large, broad scale, like magnified MSS., in proportion to the space to be covered, a new form of ornament might be worked out with good result in our own smaller churches. It is a question

¹ *Roma Subterranea*, V. c. xxii. vol. ii. p. 265, 6.

of colour and proportion. Letters may be made beautiful enough as ornament: a very little trouble in selection from Prof. Westwood's *Palæographia Sacra*, or Count Bastard would soon show how, and supply countless examples, only for the copying. The scale of the illuminated wall being so much larger than the illuminated page, it would require more subdued hues; but common rules, or, what is the same thing, a tolerable eye for colour and a little practice, would soon settle that. The initial-letter of each text should by rights contain an illustration or symbol of its meaning; and the result would be better than the mere dregs of Morris and Faulkner; which are now too frequently substituted for that decent old whitewash which we have often good reason to regret.

It will be seen, on looking to our list at page 133, that the primitive choice of subjects from the Old Testament was determined by the New. The last three groups on our list, Job, Tobias, and Susanna, are very rare; Tobias I think altogether uncertain, as I only know of one dubious example in the Callixtine Catacomb. The New Testament cycle dwells almost entirely on the Lord's life and miracles of mercy. There is one frescoed crucifixion in the Catacombs, assigned to Pope Adrian III., A.D. 884: the one Passion-subject in the sarcophagi besides Pilate is the Crowning with Thorns—the circlet breaking into roses; Pilate Washing his Hands is found in one or two sculptures and paintings. To the Early Church the Cross was primarily a symbol of the Lord's Person, rather than of His Death, up to the time of Constantine. The use of the X, or decussated symbol or letter, is the initial of His Name, and it was not till the Christian Empire that it gradually changed to the upright and penal sign of His Death, in the usual Latin and Greek crosses. Perhaps it was the hope of His speedy return to judge the earth: perhaps it was the dominating and supporting idea of His Incarnation and Divine Presence on earth; but the Christian congregation seems to have been for 200 years directed to think of His Sacrifice in mystery, under the well understood image of the Lamb. He was to be thought of as the Messiah, and fulfiller of the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms; as the Vine of Souls, the

Shepherd of all His people; as the Worker of all miracles, and chiefly of the conclusive wonder of His Resurrection from the Dead. He was Lord of Life and Death: but in primitive days people seem honestly to have looked over and beyond Death, and to have considered it as a brief passage between two lives, rather than the final consummation of a suffering and dubious existence here. They dwelt on the Lord's victory, rather than on His sufferings.

The Adoration of the Magi claims some special attention here, because it connects the Christian paintings with the East, or with Oriental imagery; and because it is unquestionably in it that the Blessed Virgin makes her earliest appearance in the cemeteries. It is clearly felt to convey an assertion of the Divinity of the Lord and of His Incarnation; and that, most probably, before pronounced heresies, or strict definitions of doctrine. It must have claimed attention, too, as the Epiphany or manifestation of Christ to the Gentile Church. The pictures are all very like each other. The three almost always wear the Phrygian cap and anaxyrides, or leggings, or Roman caligæ; and they are generally of youthful appearance. Sometimes they lead their horses; and in Bottari (*Tav. lxxxii.*) they wear boots and rowelled spurs, which indicates either a very late restoration, or some considerable mistake on the part of the draughtsman or engraver. In a fresco in S. Agnes they appear before Herod; and on the gates of S. Zenone, in Verona, they are observing the Star. The great Procession of Holy Women in S. Apollinare Nuova, at Ravenna, ends near the altar with their Adoration; evidently intended to introduce the Virgin as Mother of the Lord and blessed among women. In the original state of the fifth-century mosaic of the Adoration in Sta. Maria Maggiore, at Rome, she occupied a smaller throne by the side of her Son, who was receiving the Adoration attended by angels.¹

The Miracle of Cana is more frequent in carvings than in fresco, but occurs in the cemetery of Lucina in the Callixtine

¹ See Smith's *Dictionary of Christian Antiquities*, s. v. "Angels and Archangels;" also Ciampini's *Vetera Monumenta*, vol. i. p. 200, tab. xlix. Ciampini is the old authority for everything out of the Catacombs.

(Bottari, *Tav.* 19, 31, 51, 18, 89). There is a beautiful ivory plaque or tablet in the Duomo at Ravenna, which is said to be part of the covering of the Exarch's throne, and which is figured under "Cana, Miracle of," in Smith's *Dictionary*. Our Lord sometimes touches the hydriæ or water-pots with a wand; and one is placed in His hand in the Raising of Lazarus. There are not always six pots represented, as in the Ravenna ivory; four or five are enough to fill the space in many pictures, and Bottari makes the sensible remark that the artists may have been hampered by knowing that these vessels were large, containing as much as a "Metretes." This miracle has passed into the cycle of modern sacred art, so-called. What has been said on the Vine may partly apply to it, as to the Rafaelesque or modern treatment of the Fall, Moses, David, and Elijah, where Daniel is painted so obviously for the sake of the lions that I sincerely wish (in Mr. Bretton Rivière's otherwise excellent picture, for example) that he could be left out altogether, and supposed at the side. This is done, and I think rightly done, in an Adoration of Shepherds by Bassano, with nothing to adore; they and their herds forming the whole subject. The Venetian was a straightforward fellow at all events, or he had enough reverence left in him to shrink from painting a Nativity deliberately expressive of indifference to the birth of the Son of God.

All our New Testament list are also treated as modern subjects, artistically, and for the sake of the picture; and there may be no harm in that. But it must be remembered that, now there is no conventional method or fixed symbol of representation as in primitive days, the effect of the "sacred" picture, for good or evil, depends on the spirit of the man who paints it. If he believes what he paints, his picture will show it, as Holman Hunt's; if he does not, it will show that also, as Doré's; if he thinks the Scriptural event grave matter of thought and faithful record under the light of his imagination, that too will be seen in his work, as in Poynter's. I once heard an eminent painter speak, with not unreasonable contempt and dislike, of the "pious dodges" of incompetent persons, who chose sacred subjects in the hope of selling their

pictures and establishing a reputation in that line. It may have had a good deal to do with his own desertion of religious work; but at all events, until that took place, he never did any sacred picture for the market, or without strong feeling of his own, and the desire to illustrate some then believed event.

We hear much of the general acceptance of atheism by the artistic profession; and it is already accompanied, as might be expected, by contempt for their own work and for themselves, and by overpowering prevalence of fashionable and empty subjects, in rivalry of the photograph shops. Messrs. Watts and Burne Jones hold out, and are treated accordingly, in secularist or scandalous newspapers. The President of the Royal Academy, with Professor Richmond and one or two others, are perhaps strong enough to support a good classical school of motives; but for all that triviality does prevail, and men have not heart to paint, because they think they have no souls. The artistic mind soon runs to pessimism and accepts evil as a law; and decoration, arrangements, nocturns, and symphonies are the best which can come of that. The worst we have not seen yet; but the dregs of civilisation are pretty much the same in Rome or Byzantium, Paris or London.

The cures of the Syrophenician Woman and the Paralytic Man were more favourite subjects in the Early Church than they are in modern art. The latter is almost always represented carrying his bed, in the Catacomb paintings; perhaps with reference to Our Lord's direct claim to forgive sins, of which He made that action the attesting sign. The blind men, or Bartimæus, have always been represented, in painting and sculpture. All these subjects, of course, occur in illuminated Evangelaries and service-books. The Loaves and the Raising of Lazarus are constantly found, but the Entry into Jerusalem and Zacchæus are much oftener seen in sculpture or in MSS. I do not remember either in fresco.

The Agape, as a subject of the Catacomb paintings, requires separate treatment, from its relation to the ethnic funeral-feast; and it had better be our means of transition from the Scriptural cycle to the numerous other subjects, which are not directly taken from the Old or New Testament.

The evangelic symbols, the Fish and others, are in this partly Scriptural category, and the Seasons, Dolia, Chariot, and other examples come from entirely secular sources.

There is and must always be a certain reserve, or some amount of actual sparring, between ourselves and the Roman Catholic authorities of modern days, about the Catacombs and their illustrations. It is better to take that as it comes, on such subjects of dispute as we find. Yet they ought not to be many, for there is no doubt that these pictures furnish something like a body of Early Church doctrine, as held by the people, with a vast deal of historical and archæological information scarcely to be had elsewhere. As D'Agincourt said (and it was literally true in his time) the Catacombs and their tombs furnish the only authorities for the early decadence of painting ; and the meaning of these pictures being evident and unmistakable, they certainly set forth the practical and popular Creed of the first centuries in a markedly instructive way. These were the practical religious thought of the time ; they gave us at least an approximative idea of the hopes and expectations in death of whole generations of faithful men and women. There is no doubt a tendency to pious anachronism in some of the accounts of the Catacombs, by which every subterranean picture is referred to the second or third century, and the more eagerly if it contains anything like mediæval vestment or tonsure, or distinctively Roman characteristics of any kind.¹

But it is quite easy to distinguish between later and earlier work to those who care to do so. It was not till the sixth century that the stiffer and more ecclesiastical figures seen in S. Pontianus' Catacomb, for example, made their appearance. You have only to see the unquestionably early works with the contemporary Gentile decoration to understand that the ruder and more barbaric pictures *must* be of later date.

Some of these works are unquestionably of the Primitive Church, and it will never do to neglect them because they are found in Rome and not elsewhere. Much of what has gone before about architecture has shown how much we have

¹ The ninth-century frescoes of S. Clemente are described simply as "*Imagines Vetustissimæ*," and put on a level with S. Domitilla's.

inherited, like the rest of the Teutonic world, from the vast power, organisation, and accumulated knowledge which the great Imperium brought to bear on all its subjects, even on the far-away Britons. These were not our ancestors, but our ancestors' victims for the most part; and very many of us are descended from fresh waves of Northmen, who dealt by Saxons and Angles as they had dealt by the race of Claudia and Pudens. But it is due to the teaching of Rome, *i.e.* of the Christian Faith received through Greece and Rome, that our whole history is not one continuous "gathering of ravens and wolves to the feast." Any student of the dreadful history of the Decline, Fall, and Reconstruction of Civilisation among the Teutonic races will see that the first step was to bring them to conceive the action of mercy, to utter the word "spare." Alboin just learnt it and died, in Lombardy. In England, Cœur de Lion, as great a savage as he, even under S. Hugh of Lincoln's teaching, was able to pronounce it in his last moments. That word the Christian Faith alone could teach. But when the barbarian had once mastered it, he could take very easily to all the great Order and Law of ancient Rome. To forget all we have received through Rome is to ignore or quarrel with history; and it is in history that the strength of our case lies against the Roman Curia, whenever that case has to be gravely asserted. As to Church decoration, it seems that the limits of representation and symbolism within which the Church of the first four centuries abode and prevailed ought to content us in our own day; and there is plenty of room for the highest flight of artistic imagination, in the records of the History of Man's Creation and Redemption. All our artists have to do is to believe it, and if they will not, it is not my immediate duty to give any opinion as to what will happen to them in the next world; but as for the present one, into the Bathos of emptiness and frigidity they will go without redemption; and that appears to be the present direction of their efforts. With those of the Sensualists I am not now concerned.

CHAPTER III.

CHRISTIAN SYMBOLISM.

TO write about the extra-Scriptural cycle of the catacomb pictures is to enter on the subject of Christian symbolism in general. The nearest approach to fixed rule about the use of imagery which can be made for modern times, is to allow Scriptural subjects only ; and that term may be very widely and variously interpreted, and seems to have been so from the first. It seems to have been held from the first that the mention of any name of man or angel in Holy Scripture made him at least admissible into iconography ; perhaps only as a historical personage in some scene of action, as Pilate or Herod ; perhaps as deserving of commemoration in his own person, like the Apostles and Evangelists. This distinction of Christian symbolism (or imagery, or iconography) into historical and commemorative is of some importance, and seems to have been felt from the earliest times. It was certainly early understood that historical delineation of events is as harmless as pictorial description in words ; since both alike are intended for instruction, and do not appeal to the feelings primarily or chiefly. But, it was probably not long after pictures of non-apostolic saints first appeared on church walls, that thinking men began to see danger in them, whether of exciting undue emotion, wide of the scope of Christian worship, or, indeed and in consequence, of misdirecting popular devotion altogether. Sainly persons in a historical picture are engaged in its action, and part of its composition ; they are acting as saints, doing something to God's glory ; to which the picture is, at least in theory,

directed. The whole labour of the artist is not expended on one chief figure—humanity is in its right place of subordination to God's glory and purpose. It is certainly possible to feel strongly, and be roused to genuine devotion before such pictures as Tintoret's *Paradise* or *Crucifixion*; and these works, with some others of more recent date, mark something like a central consummation of Christian historical art. But the devotion they excite or express is for God in Christ alone; or, at the most, they express the blessing above women which belongs to the Mother of Christ.

The effect of beautiful or attractive portrait-images is, and always was and will be, markedly different. Still it must be observed that figures of Apostles occur on the earliest fourth century sarcophagi, generally as in attendance upon our Lord; and further, it is true that the dead themselves are represented in portrait, both in sculpture, as Probus and Proba,¹ or on walls and ceilings. For the majority perhaps of the male and female Oranti, or praying figures in the catacombs, may be memorial figures of the dead, with more or less of attempted likeness. See Bottari, *Tav.* clx. and clxi., for medallion portraits of considerable merit. Both are apparently of young military men, and there is a conjecture that they are two of a number of soldiers martyred in the reign of Numerianus, with Claudius, their tribune. One has a fine Gothic countenance, which Bosio's artist was not likely to have invented. Chief examples of portraits in mosaic are the remarkable ones of Justinian and Theodora at St. Vitale, in Ravenna, and at the convent of Mount Sinai. The strongly-marked countenances in many Eastern and early Gothic works can hardly be ideal; and most of us may remember Fra Angelico's constant habit of representing his Dominican brethren in countenance and habit as they lived.

But as to commemorative portraits in churches, it was soon found that all aids to devotion are subject to the frailty of the user, who is, in the nature of things, likely to think more of the aid than the devotion. Those who have realised something in thought, of faith in the Communion of Saints, ought to be able to pray with the saints without looking at features

¹ Bottari. *Tav.* xvi. (Bosio's plate; also in Aringhi, Vol I.)

they never knew; and which are not, in fact, asserted to be *like* saints long since out of the body. These pictures cannot be considered, as Professor Max Müller's ingenious Brahmin put it, as portraits of deceased friends. We never saw their subjects in the flesh. We know what it is to see the likeness of the brother we have seen, and who, as we trust, is with God and among the saints; it may be that we pray with him and them before the throne of God, and to Him who sitteth thereon. True portraits of the loved and lost might raise genuine emotion in prayer; though of course families cannot have their Lares and Penates in church. But as to fancy pictures of the greatest saints, they seem to us to be indefensible on the ground of their ministering to past human affection, and undesirable as an aid to present devotion. Anthropomorphism is natural, but in this case it is against the Second Commandment. Praying before a face or form must practically come to praying to it. The dark-eyed Virgin meets the gaze of the worshipper; in theory she is in all her portraits as omnipresent; she will hear as omnipotent; surely she will hear, she is hearing, the prayer of faith and need and terror. She looks as if she heard: did not her eyes change, in the gaze which is strained on them through tears? It must be so—it was so—she moved, or winked, or something; and there is your miracle, and all its train of dubious glories and mockeries.

English clergy, for many years before the Oxford movement, are now described as either Methodists, holding wrong tenets sincerely, or worldly pluralists who believed nothing and preached against enthusiasm, which is now held to be the one thing needful. Our age is a fast one, and expects that quality in all clergy. They are to strive for pace instead of peace, and show well in front of every movement; if possible, they are neither themselves to see, nor suggest to others, which way it ought to move, or where it ought to stop. It is therefore an unpopular thing to have to assert that common sense or judgment is a judicial faculty and the gift of God, intended to be used and to guide us in spiritual things; just as enthusiasm, or partial abandonment of ordinary rules of mental judgment, is the gift of God on certain rare occasions.

It is more awkward still to require deliberate judgment, moderation, or decency itself, in congregational acts of devotion, or to have to deny that the excitement which passes for devotion is a thing to be had at any price. It was probably found that Greek or Italian assemblies in the sixth or seventh centuries were raised to a higher pitch of emotion by praying before saints whom they could see; and that carried the whole iconolatry-question with their clergy. This is one of the commonest forms of seeking after a sign; and after a due amount of devotion the sign will assuredly take the place of the thing signified; and the image, having long excited passionate feeling, will be supposed to have shown life or miraculous power. Then God or the saint is in it, and it can help the worshipper.

The saving distinction between symbolism and idolatry seems to consist in this, that the true symbol is not *like* that which it calls to the mind, and does not represent it to the eye. It is properly a visible sign of the Invisible—pointing towards Him, teaching truth concerning Him, proclaiming itself *not* to be Him. It was on this principle, or so it seems, that the Cherub forms were used in Hebrew worship. The people were protected from temptation to worship them by their being represented in pairs, and as ministers attendant on the special Presence of God. It is supposed indeed that the forms of the Cherubs of Glory on the Ark were known only to the priests; the people being allowed to see another conventional form on the doors of the Temple. But Cherubs were known as *ministering* spirits, and were not worshipped. Nor does it seem ever to have entered the mind of any Primitive Christian to worship the Vine, or Fish, or Good Shepherd. Even the last is not represented as standing to receive the worship of His people—that is for the portrait-image. The Shepherd is engaged in care of His charge, laying them on his shoulders or bearing them in His arms. The figure is only a graphic repetition of the Lord's own parable about Himself, as King and Shepherd of mankind. It is symbolic of His office, not of His Person. The image has been used before and in other lands, being Homeric and universal—probably from the earliest days of Aryan herdsmen.

1

The difference between the portrait-image and the figures in a historical picture has already been noted ; it was long felt and understood, and appears in the important answer of Charlemagne's bishops to the Second Council of Nice, called the *Libri Carolini*. Our own Anglican view seems to stand on it ; but it has never been much regarded in Southern Europe, or by the mass of mankind. Simple or thoughtless people only think that an image is an image ; they do not see much difference between a symbol which reminds of God, and a figure which, as they are told, represents and is like Him. The distinction between historical pictures of saints doing something, and portrait images of saints standing for adoration, was never sustained ; nobody saw it or cared for it. Compromises were founded on it for a time ; but then, as always happens, the more numerous, dull, and powerful party interpreted all compromise its own way. The secret force of image-worship, and infidelity as well, has always been expressed in the unavailing excuse of Aaron—that the people were set on mischief, and that he was unable to control them, but determined, at least, to appear to lead them. That is always the history of Iconulism.

I think it is best to give a list of Christian symbols here, generally of such as are derived from other sources than Holy Scripture. When (as in the very first instance) they are derived from it, or when they are used in the Bible as ordinary forms of expression, the exception may be excused.

A and ω (the Omega is always given in the minuscular or "small" form in early Church art). These symbolic letters are generally attached to the monogram of Christ, or suspended from the arms of the cross, whether decussated or upright. (De Rossi, Inscription No. 776 ; Bottari, *Tav.* xliv.) They are found on cups, rings, sigils, coins, and *passim*, from the death of Constantine. After the Council of Nice they had a peculiar bearing, and were taken as proper assertion of the Divinity of Our Lord, from Revelation xxii. 13, but they seem to have been used before. (Boldetti, from Callixtine Catacomb, *Tav.* iii. 4, p. 194, and Aringhi, i. 605.)

Agape.—These representations must be symbolic. Meetings certainly took place from Apostolic times, which may be described as suppers preceding the actually Eucharistic Breaking of Bread. It is at least probable that the order of the Last Supper would be followed on such occasions; and that the breaking and pouring forth, the actual Celebration, would come at the end. It seems from S. Ignatius's Epistle to the Smyrnæan Church that the presence of the Bishop, or chief of a congregation or assemblage of the Church, was held necessary, the Agape being a prelude to the Eucharist. The words are—*Non licet sine episcopo, neque baptizare, neque agapen celebrare* (πρωεῖν) (c. viii.). There was probably a dangerous resemblance between the Christian and Hebrew, or even heathen funeral feasts, which may have been one of the causes which led to the discontinuance of the former. They were too like each other.¹ There is no disputing the resemblances between the Agape represented in Domitilla's Catacomb, those in S. Callixtus, in SS. Marcellinus and Peter, and the certainly heathen picture of the Banquet of the Seven Priests in the Gnostic Catacomb. It would seem that in many earlier Christian representations, besides the Eucharistic Celebration, the last repast of the Lord with the six Disciples at the Lake of Gennesaret, is in the mind of the designer (S. John xxi. 2). Bread and fish are constantly placed on the table. In fact, until the sixth century, and the Ravenna mosaic of Melchisedec in the act of consecrating the elements, Christian pictures point rather to the Agape or commemorative love-feast, than to the memorial sacrifice of bread and wine. Perhaps the former was allowed without the presence of a Bishop, for whom the sacrificial act would be reserved. This would imply a separation of the Agape from the Eucharist. But that separation did unquestionably take place, when the former was discontinued on account of the disorders which took place.² These are matter of recurrent complaint from

¹ See Raoul Rochette on the Catacomb Pictures, and Professor Mommsen's Essay, *Contemporary Review*, May, 1871.

² See *Primitive Church Art*, p. 221; Raoul Rochette, *Mém. de l'Institut des Belles-Lettres*, t. xiii. p. 715. Also the Rev E. Hatch's *Bampton Lectures* for 1880.

Apostolic times downwards.¹ At all events, the general presence of bread and fish in these pictures, instead of bread² and wine, point to a distinction between the Eucharist and the Agapæ which cannot but be maintained.

The difficulty of regulating the Agapæ really seems to have turned on their connection with family and domestic worship and priesthood. They may have been held as nuptial, baptismal, or votive, as well as funereal (*connubiales, dedicatoriæ, natalitiæ, funereales*), although Raoul Rochette's Belgian editors observe that the natalitiæ of a martyr are not the day of his birth into the world, but of his death into eternal life. (*Tableaux des C.* p. 216.) Nevertheless their proper connection with Christian ritual was as funereal commemorations. They could not be held as private or family feasts: their relation to the Gospel was either as suppers preparatory to solemn Communion, or possibly in commemoration of the last repast with the Disciples at the Sea of Galilee. The subject cannot be rightly understood without comparing the account of that event in the last chapter of S. John, and also the Lord's discourse in chapter vi. of that Gospel.³

Two Agapæ are represented in the Catacomb of SS. Marcellinus and Peter (known otherwise as that *Inter duas Lauros* on the Via Labicana). Raoul Rochette selects them, with those from the Callixtine, as the most ancient with which he is acquainted, and has no doubt whatever of their relation to pictures in Herculaneum and Pompeii. The student should compare Bottari, t. ii. *Tav.* cviii. and cxxvii. with *Pittura d'Ercolaneò*, t. i. *Tav.* xiv., *R. Museo Borbonico*, t. i. *Tav.* xxiii., Zahn, *Ornament. aus Pompeii*, fol. 90. The only difference is that the horn or rhyton drunk from at the small end is used in the Gentile work, whereas the Christian copy (*Tav.* cviii.) substitutes a round bowl. Pompeian representations of domestic repasts are easily found in Smith's

¹ Cor. xi. 20; Augustine de Moribus Ecclesiæ, xxxiv. ; S. Ambrose de Eliæ J. cxxvii. ; S. Paulinus of Nola, Poema ix. de Natal. et Felic. P. xxvi. or xxxv. Both S. Ambrose and S. Augustine speak of drunkenness as not uncommon on these occasions.

² Always the *panis decussatus*, or cross-bread, in baskets. See last ch. of S. John's Gospel. It has lingered to our own day.

³ See Mr. Sadler's Essay in the *Church and the Age*, First Series.

Dictionaries and elsewhere, and the reader may understand that except for inferior painting, and the decent dress of their characters, Christian pictures of the same subject greatly resemble them. In both of the Via Labicana Agapes, men and women are present together ; in both, the provisions and wine are not placed on the table, but appear to have been handed by servants, and in one the requests of two of the guests are strangely painted above their heads. "*Irene da cal(i)da(m).*" "*Agape, misce mi*" (Juv. *Sat.* v. 63). The names, as Rochette observes, are probably significant.

One of the three singular paintings engraved in Bottari, vol. iir. p. 208, represents a repast ; and as the *panis decussatus* is on the table,¹ it must be supposed to be a Christian Agape. Yet the guests are evidently meant to be reclining at table, not sitting ; and some are crowned with Horatian wreaths of flowers. The names SEBIE and VINCENTIU are written above two of them. This picture would of itself be a perfect link between the classical and Christian work. But there are two others of apparently a Gnostic or Mithraic character, which are undoubtedly of great antiquity, but differ so greatly from Christian subjects of the same apparent date that they must be entirely separated from them. One is the celebrated *Inductio Vibies* : Vivia, a maiden or matron, is presented by a Mercury (with wand and petasus) to two figures on a throne of squared blocks, one bearded and with a nimbus, the other female. Mercurius Minutius² is written above the Mercury. Still more singular is the second, where a youthful figure—it is hard to say whether male or female—is being rapt away in the arms of Death or Hades, in a chariot with four horses abreast, led, or preceded by, Mercury with his caduceus ; and with the addition of the Dolium or empty cask, known as an ancient symbol of death, and the departure of the spirit from the body. These are part of the Gnostic or Mithraic Catacomb ; they may be works of the imagination of some eclectic or half-converted person—perhaps of the stamp of Alexander Severus, but further instructed in the faith. They seem to amount to an effort to invest mythological symbolism with

¹ See also *Tav.* clxiii. for an Agape sculptured on a sarcophagus.

² Or Nuntius. Parker. Vol. on Catacombs, pp. 174, 197, plates xv. xvi.

Christian meaning, and doubtless such attempts at reconciliation may have occupied many minds who embraced the New Truth, yet could not divest themselves of the habits of ancient fancy. At all events these pictures illustrate the strange contact and contest, in habits of thought and treatment, between Greek and Christian.

The now celebrated and curiosity-provoking Mithraic Catacomb has also its Agape of seven priests of Mithras, the Sun-God. Its painting, like that of the other pictures in this catacomb, is so coarse and indifferent that it must be considered either late work after the time of Constantine, or the very rudest of an earlier date. It is not the least archaic or Byzantine, it is only a very incompetent attempt at classical figuring, as inferior to the Callixtine paintings as they are to fine Pompeian work. The catacomb itself is considered ancient, that is to say, first or second century, by Mr. Wharton Marriott and others. If it be so, it may possibly have been re-painted in the time of Julian, who, as is well-known, considered himself the chosen worshipper of the Sun-God, and steadily endeavoured to set up or restore a Mithraic worship. It also suggests that subtle imitation of parts and details of Christianity, which that emperor adopted by way of taking hints from his enemy.¹

The subject of the Agape is delicate, because it brings the central rite of Christianity in contact with ethnic or human observance, quite apart from the faith. But the fact that all early pictures of this kind represent the repast only, and in no case anything really like an act of Celebration, enables us from our picture-data to do what we think may be done in a more general way, and separate the Agape from the Celebration; at least so far as to say that funeral and other feasts may have been celebrated in the catacombs elsewhere with prayer and solemnity, yet without the Eucharist. The numerous cubicula for families were no doubt, as Mr. Wharton Marriott points out, intended for

¹ See M. de Broglie's *L'Église et l'Empire Romain*, vol. iv. chapters vi. vii., and "Review" by Dr. Lake, *Cont. Review*. If it be of his date, the catacomb is a most interesting record: not like the others of the victory of the Cross of suffering, but of the last struggles of Paganism during its final gleam of triumph.

domestic meetings of this kind; and it is gratuitous to suppose that the Eucharist was always celebrated at them. Indeed it would be most painful to think so; for it would be to suppose that the unquestionable irregularities which took place, and which caused the discontinuance of the Agape, were all committed at or after Holy Communion, and the sin of the Corinthians in days of comparative ignorance repeated at Rome, through the first five centuries. References may be made for these disorders to SS. Augustine,¹ Ambrose,² and Paulinus of Nola.³ It is certain that the love-feast reminded untaught converts too closely of the ancient hearth-worship, and of past banquets to the Lares of their families. It is one sign of the vast power and vitality of the faith that it could withdraw the whole population of Italy from Etrurian habits of ancestral worship, and bid them commemorate the death of One only. But there came a great transition, by which the attention of the Church was drawn to His death and its representations, while His life and love for all men was forgotten; so that He came to be to ordinary thought a crucified image below, and a merciless Judge above; not a Mediator, but one to be interceded with. This is marked by, or at least contemporaneous with, the true Byzantine or Ascetic form of Christian art; when the last inspirations of Greek naturalism had perished, and the Church began to renew art in darkness and distress, with inspiration of her own, and with such relics of technical methods as were left her.

The *anchor* is a common sepulchral emblem, conveying the idea of rest in hope. De Rossi (*De Monumentis* and *Ἰχθύς* p. 18) thinks that it may be sometimes used as a symbol of the names Elpis or Elpidius, &c., &c. The mystic fish is often added. Its form is constantly associated with that of the cross (See De Rossi, vol. i. pl. 18, 20). It is very ancient,

¹ Aug. *De Moribus Ecclesie*, ch. xxxiv. "Novi multos esse qui luxuriosissime super mortuos bibunt, et epulas cadaveribus exhibentes super sepultos se ipsos sepeliant, et voracitates ebrietatesque suas deputent religioni."

² Ambrose, *De Elia et Jejunio*, ch. xxvii.

³ *Poema* xxvi. xxvii. De Sant. Felic. and xxviii. 167—179, and xxxv., where he explains that one of his reasons for illuminating his Church with historical paintings is to produce reverence and quiet, and shorten the drunken revels of the untaught.

being one of S. Clement of Alexandria's commended symbols (*Pædag.* iii. 106).

Angels are seldom represented, as the Abbé Martigny admits, before the fourth century. The genii and winged boys of S. Prætextatus's catacomb and the tombs of the Ardeatine Way (Aringhi, II. p. 29, 167; Bottari II., *Tav.* lxxiv. xciii., &c.) cannot be thought to have stood for angelic beings in the mind of their painters or first spectators. (See index in *Primitive Church Art.*)

Birds, not distinguished by their species, as dove, peacock, or eagle, &c., are often found in early frescoes. With the palm-branch, they may be taken as symbols of the released soul (Aringhi, II. p. 324): a passage of some beauty: he takes the lightness and beauty of the bird as symbolic of the aspiration of faithful spirits: as Bede says, "*Volucres sunt qui sursum cor habent et cælestia concupiscant.*" Caged birds are sometimes found in paintings (Boldetti, *Tav.* vi. p. 154), and may stand for the soul imprisoned in the flesh. The symbolism of the cross by a bird's outspread wings is S. Jerome's;¹ and Herzog also refers it to Tertullian.

Bread is represented in the Agapes, and in the Miracle of the Loves on Sarcophagi (See *suprà*, and for the Miracle, Bottari, *Tavo.* lxiii. and lxxxix). For the fish bearing bread and wine, see De Rossi, I. *Tav.* viii. The bread is generally *panis decussatus*, a crossed bread.

Calf.—Not in catacombs; but see *Primitive Church Art*, p. 315.

Camel.—Among the animals which surround the mystic Orpheus. (See Bottari, *Tav.* lxiii. and lxxi.)

Car or Chariot.—Herzog (*Real-Encyclopädie für protestantische Theologie*, &c. s. v. Sinnbilder) mentions a sculpture in S. Callixtus of a chariot without driver, with pole turned backwards, and whip left at rest on it: a symbol of the accomplished course. Two quadrigæ in the second cubiculum of S. Priscilla, catacomb on the Salarian Way (Bottari clx.). In S. Prætextatus (Perrot, *Catacombes*, vol. i. pl. lxxii.), occurs the representation mentioned above, of the Chariot of Death, who is taking a departed woman in beside him.

¹ *Comment. in Marcum.*

Symbolisms and personifications of the *Church* (setting aside that of lambs or sheep attendant on the Good Shepherd) are very numerous. The Shepherd sometimes has goats with Him as well as sheep, and frequently the sheep issue in two bands from separate buildings or folds, one called Hierusalem, the other Bethlehem, representing the Hebrew and Gentile sides of the Church. Sometimes, as in the baptism of S. Pontianus's Catacomb, the Lord stands by the mystic "Jordanes," and then the stag represents the Gentile Church, with the lamb. Doves, as well as lambs, are taken to represent the faithful; and the female Oranti in the catacombs no doubt often stand for the Church (Bottari, *Tav.* xxxviii.). Susanna and the Elders, in a few yet existing examples (see Smith's or Martigny's *Dictionaries*), seem to stand for the Church under persecution; and the woman with the issue of blood, so frequently represented, has been thought to be the same. (Bottari, *Tavv.* xix. xxi., &c., &c.; S. Ambrose, lib. ii. in Luc. viii.)

For pure symbolism, the Ark of Noah and the Ship of Souls are earlier or later forms of the same idea. The ship "covered with the waves," is represented in Martigny's Dictionary (*Église*), and Smith (p. 388, vol. i.), from a Callixtine fresco. It is a yet more interesting figure when, instead of a ship being painted as like the Church, an actual Church is built with reference to the form of a ship. This is certainly the case with the Duomo of Torcello; and a passage in the Apostolical Constitutions (lib. ii. 57), again referred to *infra* and quoted at length, is to the same effect: "Let the building be turned lengthways to the east . . . it is like a ship—and let the bishop's throne be set in the midst; and on each side of him let the presbytery be seated; and let the deacons stand beside, for they are like to sailors and petty officers" (τοῖς ἀρχοῖς, boatswain, who gave orders to the "wall" or rank of oars). Our Lord holds the steering-oar in a galley of six oars on a side, on a jasper figured by Cardinal Borgia in the frontispiece, and at p. 213 of his book on the Cross of Velitræ.

Cock.—Frequently on tombs, either with S. Peter (Bottari, *Tav.* lxxxiv.), or placed on a pillar (xxiii., xxxiv., &c.), when it seems to point to the resurrection; our Lord being

supposed, by the early Church, to have sprung from the tomb at the early cock-crowing. Prudentius's hymn, "Ad Galli Cantum," adopts cock-crowing as a figure of the general call to judgment—*Nostri figura est Judicis* (see 45 sqq., and again at line 65)—

"Inde est, quod omnes credimus,
Illo quietis tempore,
Quo gallus exultans canit,
Christum redisse ab inferis."

Corn appears chiefly in representations of the Fall of Man (Bottari, vol. i. *Tav.* xv.). Reapers in S. Pontianus, Bottari, i. *Tav.* xlviii. In Callixtine, vol. ii. *Tav.* lv.

Death is signified by birds, denoting the flight of the soul away to rest, by the ship with furled sails; the unyoked chariot, &c. There are no terrors of death in primitive art. With the skulls and worms in the Last Judgment of Torcello, the hells of the Utrecht Psalter, and other early MSS., a whole pictorial course of ascetic commination begins; adopted by Giotto in the crowned skeleton at Assisi, and by Orgagna in the *Triumph of Death* at Pisa. It reappears with Holbein in Transalpine Protestantism.

Casks or Dolia (Boldetti, pp. 164, 368; Bottari, *Tav.* lxxxiv.)—Seven men with a Dolium, and two others. Perhaps the empty cask, or body at rest when the soul is departed; perhaps a play on the word *dolere*; Martigny (in *Dictionnaire des Antiquités Chrétiennes*) quotes an inscription, S. V. IVLIO FILIO PATER DOLIENS, which seems a conclusive example. The expression of great feelings often wanders into small play on words, like Hotspur, Cold Spur.

Dolphin.—I do not see that this can mean anything; but there are certainly dolphins on the tomb of Baleria or Valeria Latobia (Bottari, *Tav.* xx.), and they are said to indicate conjugal love; the Abbé Martigny alone knows why.

Dove or Doves.—The single dove, in representations of the Lord's Baptism, as in S. Pontianus's Catacomb at Rome, at Ravenna, and *passim*, stands for the presence of God the Holy Spirit. Otherwise, the twelve doves occur frequently in mosaic, and they are found in pairs on inscriptions, as representing the faithful. (See *Primitive Church Art*, p. 327; Bottari, i. p. 118; Gori's *Thesaurus Diptycharum*, vol. iii. p. 160.)

Dragon.—Not in catacombs. (For sculpture, see Serpent, and Bottari, pl. xix.)

Eagle can only be spoken of as a Christian symbol when it appears to represent the fourth Evangelist. It was to the last a heathen object of worship on Roman standards, not an emblem only.

Eggs were found (of marble), says Boldetti (p. 519), in the tombs of S. Theodora, S. Balbina, and others. S. Augustine has a strange simile of the Egg of our Hope, &c., &c., in *Serm.* cv. 8; Migne, vol. xxxviii. p. 623. The use of eggs at Easter seems to signify our hope of the resurrection.


The *Evangelic Symbols* do not belong to the catacomb paintings of early date. Mrs. Jameson says, in *Sacred and Legendary Art*, that the connection of the visions of Ezekiel and S. John, as to the tetramorph or fourfold aspect of the cherubic forms attendant on the presence of God, was noticed as early as the second century. It is possible; but it is not recorded on Christian monuments before the fifth century. Nor was it till long after the Four Creatures, or *Zôa*, had been taken as representing the four Evangelists, that a special application was made of each symbol to each writer. This may be referred to S. Jerome on Ezek. i. ; S. Matthew as the Man, as beginning with the Lord's human genealogy; S. Mark, the Lion, as testifying the Lord's royal dignity, or as containing the dreadful condemnation of unbelievers at the end of his Gospel, or for any other reason; S. Luke, the Ox, as he dwells on the priesthood and sacrifice of Christ, if he does so more than the other Evangelists; S. John, the Eagle, as contemplating the Lord's divine nature. At all events, the *earliest* representation of the four *Gospels* is the four Books or Rolls, or the four Rivers of the Rock on which the form of Christ stands from the fourth century. But the tetramorphic symbols are used universally, east and west, throughout the Christian world, and in all vehicles and methods. They are very frequent on seventh-century crosses; but the most interesting representation of them is of the sixth. It is the quaint but grand tetramorph of the Laurentian, or Rabula, or Florentine Evangeliary; repeated by Assemani, by D'Agincourt, in Smith's *Dictionary*, s. v. Angel, in *Primitive Church*

Art, and elsewhere. There are grand examples in the spandrels of the dome of Galla Placidia's Chapel, at Ravenna ; in S. Apollinare in Classe, and S. Vitale ; in the Evangelaries of Drogon and Louis le Debonnaire, first half of ninth century, and *passim* in Church painting, furniture, and books ; not, however, on the glass vessels figured by Buonarrotti and Father Garrucci.

Firmament.—The male figure raising a veil above his head, who is often placed beneath the Lord's feet on the sarcophagi, is taken to represent Uranus or the Firmament. (See Bottari, *Tavv.* xv. xxx.) The idea seems to be that of (Ps. xviii. 9, and civ. 2) darkness under His feet, and the Heavens as a curtain.

The *Fir* or *Pine*, says Bottari, passes with the cypress and myrtle for an emblem of Death (vol. ii. p. 632-3), "quia semel excisa nunquam, reviviscit et repullulascit." So Cræsus threatened the people of Lampsacus to "cut them down like a pine-tree" (Hdt. vi. 37). The fact is the use of ideas drawn from the vegetable creation is just like the use of the fruit, flowers, or trees themselves, universal and irregular, ethnic as well as Christian. No Church service can now be complete without floral display in our own days ; and let us be thankful if our busy idleness takes no worse direction than the labour of arranging bouquets, or harmless play of fancy. The *Fir* accompanies the Good Shepherd (Aringhi, ii. 203) in the Cemetery of St. Priscilla (and at pp. 75 and 25).

The *Fish*.—One of the earliest or really primitive emblems ; used like the Dove or the Lamb in more than one sense. As an anagram, ΙΧΘΥΣ means Our Lord, Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς Θεοῦ Τίος Σωτήρ. As one of His parabolic emblems, the Believer or fish of the Church's Net ; like a lamb of the fold or a dove about His Temple. The "classical passage" on this seems to be Tertullian's words near the beginning of *De Baptismo*. "Nos pisciculi secundum ἰχθύν nostrum in aquâ nascimur." S. Clement of Alexandria, in *Pædag.* iii. 106 (the other *locus classicus* about permitted emblems), commends the use of the symbol on seals and rings, with a Dove, Ship, Anchor, and Lyre. It is common on lamps and in funereal inscriptions, and the tesserae or tokens of baptismal privileges which the



newly-baptised received were often in this form. The supposed prophetic connection between Tobias's fish, this emblem, the fish of the last repast of the Sea of Galilee, and through them with the Eucharist; S. Augustine's observations in Tract cxxii. on John xvi., and Bede's on the same passage—"Piscis assus, Christus passus"—must all go for what they are worth to different readers. The habit of allegorical interpretation has often deprived both individual interpreters and whole Churches of true sense and straightforward meaning. The Lord and Apostles are often represented as fishermen in ancient art, S. Clement allowing that emblem as well as the fish itself. The net is much rarer than the line. In the Callixtine Catacomb (De Rossi, IXΘΥΣ, tab. ii. p. 4), the fisherman is drawing forth a large fish from the waters, which flow from the Rock in Horeb. So St. Zenone, at Verona, about 700 years after, on the bronze doors; this is highly important, as connecting the earlier Lombard ornamentation with the most ancient and scriptural subjects of primitive church-work. A figure in Smith's *Dictionary*, s. v. Fish, taken from Martigny, who got it from an article by Costadoni, represents a man wearing the skin of a fish and carrying a sporta or basket. Signor Polidori claims it as the Divine or Apostolic Fish or Fisherman; but it is, I fear, a Dagon, corresponding to those in Layard from Khorsabad and Nimroud (Smith's *Biblical Dictionary*, s. v. "Dagon").

The *Four Rivers* occur very frequently under the figure of Our Lord, whether He is represented in the Human Form or as a Lamb. They represent the Rivers of Eden and the Four Gospels in their first meaning. Then S. Ambrose (*De Paradiso*, v. 3.) takes them for the four cardinal virtues; and Jesse, Bishop of Amiens in the eighth century, for the four first Councils of the Church. They frequently unite in the mystic Jordan, from which the lamb and stag are drinking. This symbol occurs in fresco, very frequently on sarcophagi, and on gems, cups, and in mosaics. See Ciampini, *Vetera Monumenta*, ii., tab. xxxvii., xli., xlix., lii., &c., &c. The Fountain, or Well, or Fons Pietatis generally presents itself in this form.

The *Hand* (in the act of benediction, or issuing from a cloud) is the most ancient symbol of special manifestation

of the presence of God the Father. Martigny quotes S. Augustine, *Epist.* cxlviii. 4, "Quum audimus Manum, operationem intelligere debemus." His Hand means His working. This is an instance of the difference between analogy and similitude, the neglect of which leads to so much error and dispute. Bodily parts and human feelings, as hand, eye, ear, anger, repentance, &c., may be attributed to the Incorporeal and Infinite Being without improper anthropomorphism, if we speak by analogy, and under caution and protest. The Hand appears in most representations of Abraham's sacrifice, and events in the life of Moses (Bottari, i. *Tav.* xxvii. and lxxxix.); to Abraham alone (Bottari, ii. *Tav.* lix. and xxxiii.), from the Callixtine Catacomb. In mosaic at S. Apollinaris in Classe at Ravenna, and at S. Vitale in the Sacrifice of Isaac. (Ciampini, *Vet. Mon., Tab.* ii. pp. 81, 82; also *Tab.* xxiv. and *Tab.* xvii. D.) The Hand occurs in the Sacramentary of Drogon, son of Charlemagne and Bishop of Metz, above the Canon of the Mass.

The *Hare* is often placed in the hand of the boy who represents spring among the four seasons. The *Horse* appears in the representations of Pharaoh and the Red Sea, in translations of Elijah, and with the Magi. Both horse and hare may have the idea of swiftness in the Christian race associated with them. The *Houses* of Jerusalem and Bethlehem have been mentioned. There are woodcuts in Aringhi which seem to allude to the House of the Grave, or to the buried body as the "Deserted House" of the soul (vol. i. p. 522; vol. ii. p. 658).

The *Jordan* is often personified as a River God, in translations of Elias (Bottari, i. *Tav.* xxvii.) and in the Baptisms of Our Lord, as in the Baptisteries at Ravenna, on the Borghese sarcophagus at the Louvre, and in the early MS. of S. Mark's Library at Venice, &c. Its violent windings are much dwelt on, and two sources given—one called Jor (Arabic Ghor?), and the other Dan—meaning the cavern-spring at Cæsarea Philippi. Much has been said of the *Lamb* elsewhere. I have only to remark that about the first half of the sixth century He is placed at the intersection of Crosses, as Victim slain for man, before the Human Figure

was substituted by the Quinisext Council. The mosaic of the Lamb "as it were slain" (in Ciampini, *De Sacris Aedificiis*, tab. xiii.), with the chalice receiving His Blood, is probably of this century. The ministering and miracle-working Lamb on the tomb of Junius Bassus is described in our chapter on sculpture.

Letters are sometimes found on the skirts of apostolic robes in Mosaics, H, A, N, and Z at Ravenna. I have no notion why, and never heard any reasonable account of it.

The *Lion* generally appears with Daniel, or as an evangelical symbol with S. Mark. He is seldom coupled with the Dragon, or treated as a symbol of evil. (See, however, Gori's *Thesaurus Diptychorum*, vol. ii.) He is taken to signify watchfulness, or vigour, or authority in the faith, or anything else the writer or expositor happens to fancy.

The *Lyre* is on S. Clement's list. It stands for the human body, to be kept in harmony with the duties of the Faith. The Lyre of Orpheus (Aringhi, ii. 562) is likened to the Cross of Christ, as drawing all men to Him.

Milk and *Milkpails* are represented in the Callixtine, in connection with the Eucharist, in the third cubiculum. De Rossi's *Roma Subterranea*, vol. i., has a coloured lithograph of this picture.

The Monogram of Our Lord is so closely connected with the Cross that it will be best to treat it in a chapter or appendix on that subject.

The *Nimbus*, though it is not certainly a symbol at all by origin, is distinctly heathen; and as it is unhappily connected in various ways with both idolatry and iconulism, it requires notice, and had better be dealt with here. The Athenians who invented everything, devised, *inter alia*, certain metal coverings for their multitudinous statues, to protect them from the visits, and tokens of the visits, of small birds. These were called *μηρίσκοι*. (See Scholiast, Aristoph., *Aves* 1114.)* They came in process of time to be affixed to the heads of statues of Roman emperors. Trajan bears one in the bas-relief of the Arch of Constantine, and Antoninus Pius, and Constantine himself, on coins; also Justinian and

* And Horace, *Sat.* I., viii. 37.

Theodora in S. Vitale at Ravenna. It was made an ornamental appendage to imperial statues, and generally adopted by the Eastern emperors, and so became a token of sainthood in the Mosaics. Something has been said of how iconoclasm and the worship of created saints originated in the services performed before statues of emperors; and the use of the nimbus, springing up so late as it did, would seem to be derived from these rites. The secular or imperial nimbus even passed on to some figures of the Merovingian kings which once existed at S. Germain de Prés. (See Mabillon, *Annal. Benedict.* ann. 577.) The constant use of the nimbus seems to begin with the fifth century mosaics. The Phoenix has it on a cup in the Vatican (Northcote's *R. Subterranea*, p. 316).

The *Olive Branch* is borne by Noah's dove, and used on many tombs, perhaps as a sign of victory, or even of martyrdom. No attention seems to have been paid directly to S. Paul's allegory of the tree (Rom. xi. 17 sq.); nor yet to Zechariah's vision of the two olives and candlestick, which I never saw noticed in Christian art, or anywhere else (Zech. iv.). Trees in Bottari, lxi., cxviii., cxxv., and elsewhere seem to have been intended for the olive. Read Professor Ruskin on the Byzantine Olive, *Stones of Venice*, iii., plate iv. p. 179.

Oranti are male or female figures in the Eastern attitude of prayer, standing with outstretched arms. They may be taken as representing the Church of believers; more frequently they seem to be portraits, or memorial pictures, of the dead. The celebrated one in the Catacomb of SS. Saturninus and Thrason, grand in form and conception though ill-drawn (See Bottari, *Tav.* clxxx.), is represented in its present state in Parker's Photographs, 469 and 1470. Female *Oranti* are often drawn as richly adorned with jewels, &c. (Parker, 467, 475-6, 1751-2, 1775, 1777, &c.) It seems to have been meant only as symbolising their glory in Heaven, perhaps with a thought of the wedding garment. Compare Ruskin, *Modern Painters*, vol. iii. p. 49, for similar treatment of the Blessed Virgin by Francia and Perugino.

The *Palm-branch* occurs everywhere in sepulchral inscrip-

tions, often with the dove or phoenix. The latter, on the Peter and Paul Cross (Northcote's *Roma Subterranea*, p. 316), and under the Lateran Cross. The tree is common on sarcophagi and in mosaics. See Bottari, *Tav.* xix, xxii., lxxviii. In xxii, it is beautifully used as a pillar to divide compartments. Phoenix being Greek for palm, there may be some suggested play on words. The Phoenix is certainly represented in mosaics, placed on the palm-tree or branch and bearing the nimbus; as in those of S. Cecilia at Rome, and in SS. Cosmas and Damianus. It is connected with Baptism, as a type of death and resurrection.

Peacocks are favourite subjects in Gentile work, for the sake of their colours and graceful form, like ducks and other birds. They are found in the Jewish catacombs, and in nearly all the others. In S. Callixtus peacocks are very beautifully arranged as ornament for a round vault. Christian decorators took it as a symbol of the resurrection, from the annual loss and renewal of its beautiful feathers. Aringhi, ii., book vi., c. 36, p. 612. In SS. Marcellinus and Peter, Bottari, ii. *Tav.* xcvi., and in St. Agnes, ii. clxxiv. With Orpheus in *Tav.* lxiii.

The *Rock*, as representing Our Lord, appears in pictures of Moses (Bottari, *Tav.* xlix). It is part of the scenery of baptisms and raisings of Lazarus, &c., but I do not remember any instance of its appearance by itself as a type of Christ.

The *Four Seasons* are an adopted heathen image, adding to natural thoughts of growth and change, the Christian hope of the resurrection (Tertullian, *De Resurrect.* xii.). "Totus his ordo revolvibilis rerum testatio est resurrectionis mortuorum." Accordingly, as Martigny says, the figure of the Good Shepherd constantly accompanies the seasons. Youths or boys, or genii in such forms, are the usual personifications. The Seasons of the Domitilla Catacomb are photographed in their present condition in Mr. Parker's collection, and figured in woodcut in Smith's *Dictionary of Christian Antiquities*, s. v. Fresco, p. 693. They may have been roughly restored, but the recently discovered frescoes of S. Prætextatus' Catacomb are more beautiful, and almost to a certainty in their primitive condition (Parker's vol. on *Catacombs*, pl. i. Via Appia). The

Seasons are represented on the small ends of the Sarcophagus of Junius Bassus (Bottari, vol. i. *Tav.* i.).

The *Serpent*, in Christian symbolism, as in the imagery of other religions, represents good and evil. As the brazen serpent, standing for Our Lord in the act of sacrifice for man, it may possibly be intended by the gem which Gori has figured in the *Thesaurus Diptychorum* (vol. iii. p. 160). It is of a serpent twined about the Cross, and contemplated by two doves. It is more likely to be meant as a symbol of Our Lord (Numbers xxi. 9; S. John iii. 14) than for the tempter, as some suppose. It is very rare in early Christian art. For the actual image made by Moses, Aringhi and other Roman Catholic authorities seem to have forgotten that it was destroyed by Hezekiah (2 Kings xviii. 4). In the reigns of former kings, we do not know from what distance of time, Israel had gone through the regular pagan's progress in its honour; they had revered it, burnt incense before it, and made it an object of worship; whether they were or were not aware of later distinctions between *dulia* and *latreia*. It was destroyed; but the fact of its having been a prescribed and permitted icon for so long under the ancient dispensation was confusing to Tertullian, when he wrote in *De Idolatria* against all graphic representation, by images, pictures, or any likeness whatever. It reappeared in Europe, and on this wise: "The passion for relics has prevailed even against the history of the Bible," says Mr. Plumptre (Smith's *Dict. of the Bible*, iii. p. 1216). "The Church of St. Ambrose, at Milan, has boasted for five centuries of possessing the brazen serpent which Moses set up in the wilderness. The earlier history of the relic (so called) is matter for conjecture." (It does not add much to our knowledge to call it a Gnostic emblem.) "But our knowledge of it begins in the year 971 A.D., when an envoy was sent by the Milanese to the court of the Emperor John Zimisces at Constantinople. He was taken through the imperial cabinet of treasures, and invited to make his choice; and he chose this, which the Greeks assured him was made of the same metal as the original serpent (Sigonius, *Hist. Regni Italici*, bk. vii.). On his return it was placed in the Church of

S. Ambrose, and popularly identified with that which it professed to represent. It is at least a possible hypothesis that the Western Church has thus been led to venerate what was originally the object of worship of some Ophite sect."

The Church of S. Ambrose is thus possessed of nearly the worst and the best authenticated relics in the world ; as the recent opening of the tomb of S. Ambrose produced what must have been the genuine bones of the saint, except on a hypothesis of direct deception which is pretty well out of the question ; and more than that, two skeletons, with severed necks, were discovered below, answering to the original martyrs, Gervasius and Protasius, or whatever their real names where, to whom the original Basilica was dedicated by S. Ambrose, June 19th, 387.¹

There is a more authentic brazen serpent, half buried, in the Hippodrome at Constantinople, with, if possible, wilder vicissitudes of history. I must refer direct to Canon Rawlinson's *Herodotus*,² where it seems thoroughly established that it is the original Delphic offering of the Greeks after Plataea. The Phocians plundered the golden part in the Sacred War ; but the erasure of the name of Pausanias is still traceable on the bronze, and the rest of the inscription has been deciphered. The three heads are gone ; and all that remains is the triple-twisted column, in somewhat conical shape, sixteen feet in height. It was examined to the base when the Western powers occupied Constantinople ; and its original inscription recovered, by means of chemical solvents. I saw it in 1859, or at least a small part of it, as it had been covered up again. As to its mutilation, there is a tradition unapproachably well told by De Quincey, in *Miscellanies* ("Modern Superstitions," p. 345, 1854, Hogg, Edinburgh), which I must transcribe. It was written before the base and its inscription had been examined, when the pillar passed for an Ophite or Gnostic talisman ; and if Spon and Wheeler

¹ See personal testimony of the late Father Ambrose St. John of the Oratory, note p. 433, of Cardinal Newman's *Historical Sketches*. Pickering, 1872.

² Vol. iv. p. 365 and illustrations ; Note A in Appendix, p. 390 ; and illustration at p. 395.

saw the three heads entire in 1675 (which is uncertain), so much the worse for the Opium-Eater, who is generally most accurate in both scholarship and history.

“ This great consecrated talisman, venerated equally by Christian, by Pagan, and by Mohammedan, was struck on the head by Mohammed II., on that same day, May 29th, 1453, in which he mastered this glorious city, the bulwark of Eastern Christendom, and the immediate rival of his own European throne at Adrianople. The hour was a sad one for Christianity ; just 720 years before, the western horn of Islam had been rebuffed in France, not by Frenchmen, but chiefly by Germans, under Charles Martel. Now, it seemed as if another horn, even more vigorous, was preparing to assault Christendom from the eastern quarter. At this epoch, in the very hour of triumph, when the last of the Cæsars had glorified his station, and sealed his testimony by martyrdom, the fanatical Sultaun, riding to the stirrups in blood, and bearing that iron mace which had been his sole weapon, as well as cognizance, through the battle, advanced to the column, round which the triple serpent soared spirally upwards. He smote the brazen talisman ; he shattered one head ; he left it mutilated as the record of this great revolution ; but crush it, destroy it, he did not. As a symbol prefiguring the fortunes of Mohammedanism, his people noticed, that in the critical hour of Fate, which stamped the Sultaun’s acts with efficacy through ages, he had been prompted by his secret genius to scotch the snake, and not crush it. Afterwards the fatal hour was gone by ; and this imperfect augury has since concurred traditionally with the Mohammedan prophecies about the Adrianople gate of Constantinople, to depress the ultimate hopes of Islam in the midst of all her insolence.”

Strange irony of events and revenges of time, late brought about, that a Toork, a savage of the Eastern steppe, should at length shatter the Hellenic trophy, from the spoils of the ancient Mede ! How East meets West age after age ! The tale of Marathon follows the tale of Troy ; and Issus and Arbela, Ascalon and Hattin, all take their turn. Charles the Hammer, Richard the Lion-heart, Barbarossa, Bayazeed,

Mourad, Muhammad, "many draw swords and die." Then Lepanto stays the Eastern onset, but her noblest victors must perish with the Armada, crusading against England. Then Vienna; and where is the kingdom of Sobieski? Napoleon has to miss his Eastern destiny at Acre, England being there, having herself wasted life and valour there with Cœur de Lion; and now she is couched and watching at the gates of Syria, within sight of the Cilician mountains, that look on Issis, as Issus' self "looks on the sea." Her long arms are folded round India, protecting it from the northern swarms of desolators; and in time she may tear Asia Minor from Islam and the rule of destruction. All I have to say is, that an extra twopence of income-tax is not an overpowering consideration under the circumstances, in the eye of the historian, the soldier, the political economist, or the Christian Missionary.

To return to our list of symbols, it is pretty well accomplished, as the *Ship*, the *Stag*, &c., have been already noticed. The *Three Children* have been considered as a Scriptural emblem; the references in Bottari are *Tavola* clxix. (where an attendant is bringing logs, and perishing in the flames), *Tav.* clxxxi. (in a Phrygian dress like the Magi), clxxxvi. 6 (in a regularly-built smelting furnace, with striped pallia). Also cxcv., cxliii., and *passim*. Original state of picture in Parker's Photographs, S. Priscilla, plate iii., 1877. The *Triangle* is an infrequent symbol, more commonly used after the fourth century, like the A ω with which it is often combined; as in Aringhi, *R. S.*, i. p. 605. De Rossi has collected six or seven examples, two from Lyons, one from Africa (see Martigny's *Dictionary*). This emblem is constantly combined with the monogram of our Lord, as may be supposed likely; and has, of course, special relation to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity. The various representations of the Appearance of the Three to Abraham have been considered as illustrations of it (see Ciampini, *V. M.* tab. li., 1, from Sta. Maria Maggiore at Rome, and Parker's Photographs of the actual state of that picture, and the more beautiful one in S. Vitale at Ravenna). In all Baptismal pictures (as in the Form of Baptism) the Holy Trinity is represented by the Hand, the Cross, or

Portrait-figure of the Saviour, and the Dove. S. Paulinus of Nola thus describes all these paintings :—

“ Pleno coruscat Trinitas mysterio,
Stat Christus *amni* : vox Patris *cælo* tonat,
Et per columbam Spiritus Sanctus fluit.”

There is a curious fragment of bas-relief in De Rossi (*R. S.*, vol. i. *Tav.* xxx. p. 5), representing *Ulysses* escaping from the Sirens with his crew, emblematic of Temptation ; and as so much has been already said of the *Vine*, this may close our account of Christian symbolism in the Catacombs, and for that period of time over which they continued to be used as places of Christian worship.

One ceremonial of the seventeenth century remains and flourishes in our own, which seems to collect within itself nearly all Scriptural images of the Christian Faith. It is the ancient Passions-Vorstellung of Ober-Ammergau. It is properly a series of pictures, representing events rather than delineating character. It is highly dramatic without being in the least theatrical. For the present, at least, the devout simplicity of the actors gives them the rarest power of imaginative self-surrender : so that all seem alike to forget their own personality, and to throw themselves entirely into their parts, as representatives of Scriptural record, and that only. Each prominent character, even that of Judas, which is acted with vehement intensity and power, is conceived according to the text of Scripture, or the accepted interpretation of it. It may be said that literally no attempt to define, draw out, or give an interpretation of the character of our Lord is made by the thoughtful enthusiast who represents Him ; that the realisms of the scene and *obligato* touches of homely character are given principally to the inferior parts ; and that familiarity and realisation are graduated, so to speak, from the soldiery and buyers and sellers of the Temple, who are not only vivid, but vulgar and everyday characters, through Caiaphas, Pilate, and Judas, who are historically worked out,—to the central figure, which repeats abstractedly, and with grandeur sprung of awe and self-forgetfulness, the heavy-laden words of Him who spake as never man spake.

The following is the order of the Ammergau tableaux; the silent *verbilds* from the Old Testament always preceding the spoken pictures from the New. The asterisk marks a subject commonly represented in the Catacombs and earlier Christian monuments:—

OLD TESTAMENT.	NEW TESTAMENT.
1. * (a) The Fall, and (b) Promise of a Redeemer, a vision of the Cross. * Sacrifice of Abraham.	* The Entry into Jerusalem.
2. Brethren of Joseph in council against him. Well of Dothan.	
3. Departure of Tobias. The Bride forsaken (Song of Solomon)	The Departure to Bethany.
4. Rejection of Vashti, Jerusalem.	
5. * Fall of Manna.	The weeping over Jerusalem. The Lord's Supper.
6. * Joseph sold by his brethren for thirty pieces of Silver.	Judas accepts the thirty pieces.
7. * The Curse on the earth. Labour and Pain The kiss of Joab and Amasa.	
8. Micaiah before Ahab.	Christ before Annas.
9. Naboth and the false witnesses.	The false witnesses before Caiaphas.
10. Cain the outcast.	Remorse of Judas.
11. * Daniel condemned to the lions.	* Christ before Pilate.
12. The blood-stained coat of many colours. * Isaac on the altar.	The scourging and crown of thorns.
13. Joseph in Egypt. * Moses, Aaron, and the scapegoat.	
14. * Isaac bearing the wood of his offering. The Fiery Serpents. * The Brazen Serpent.	The Way of the Cross.
15.	
16. * Jonah.	The Crucifixion.
* Israel passing the Red Sea.	The Resurrection. The Ascension.

The main drift of the Passion-spiel is to enforce by symbolic action, the doctrines of Incarnation and Sacrifice. It is doctrinal rather than sensational, and framed for popular teaching rather than excitement. Whatever the extravagances of the mediæval mysteries may have been, they were meant as a means of knowledge for the people. We know hardly anything of them except their abuses; but if this be a fair specimen of their Scriptural teaching—if people were then taught the typical connections between the Old

and New Testament thus, by pictures in the absence of books, then all those among them who would learn were right well and widely taught. The rich and great would have their psalters and evangeliaries glowing with colour and vivid with miniature; but these acted pictures were the illuminations of the poor; and the poor require aid and teaching in our own times also. But what may be called *gradation* is applied at Ammergau as carefully to the representation of the bodily sufferings as it is to the acted realization of the characters. Judas and Caiaphas work out their parts vigorously, according to the received interpretation of their characters, while the representative of Christ uses no action, and scarcely any words, but those recorded in the Gospels. So, as to the bodily sufferings, the scourging was only suggested, ceasing the moment after the curtain rose on it. There were no repeated falls under the Cross, as in the Nuremberg and other bas-reliefs. In the scene of the Crucifixion all the facts and action were simply Scriptural. The bodily pain was supposed, not acted or insisted on. With what seemed to us a great felicity of good taste, derived from reverential awe, the ancient half-symbolic treatment of early miniatures was revived in this scene. Sharp hammer-strokes were heard just before the curtain rose, and the Cross was raised immediately after; but the grouping then greatly resembled that of the Laurentine MS. and of some very early Crucifixions, executed in Germany, apparently by Eastern workmen. The apparently crucified Form was thickly clad in white fleshings, and the body slightly and conventionally marked with blood, so as to give the idea of one of the wayside crucifixes of Tyrol or Bavaria. The soldiers cast dice as in a MS.; just enough dialogue was assigned them to show unconscious indifference. The thieves were bound unpierced to Egyptian, or tau, crosses, according to the treatment of most early MSS. The blood from the Lord's hands and feet was dwelt on as it always is, both with sacramental reference and to recall the prophecy of Psalm xxii. 16. The Form uttered the "seven words from the Cross," and those words only; the only added detail was the entreaty of the Virgin-mother, that a bone of Him

should not be broken. Of the horror and anatomical agonies of modern *quasi* religious art there were none. Perhaps, though the mind be fixed ever so attentively on the scene, the eyes cannot quite shut out the blue pines and green pastures of the Ammerthal, and the thoughts wander to the actors, and the seclusion which has preserved for us a scarcely adulterated fragment of middle-age piety. But both the realistic illusion and power of impression of the Ammergau Crucifixion are certainly less than those of a great picture. In the Crucifixion of Tintoret, for instance, the unity of the mighty master's conception prevails over all scenic realization, were that ever so startling; and the unknown power of composition, giving interest or beauty to every figure on the canvas, throws all the action and passion of the scene, backed by dim feeling of its greatness, on the spectator's mind at a glance. It seems to us that the Passion-spiel may have lost as well as gained by its recent improvements and amplifications. The hand of modern Munich is rather visible in the present *mise en scène*:¹ and though the venerable Pfarrer of the village is, we believe, the whole, sole, and admirable director and manager, we question the expediency of giving imitations of modern pictures anywhere in the play. The group of the leading home of the Virgin, part of the scene of Gethsemane, the crowning with thorns, and the descent from the Cross, carried the mind back to well-known works of too late date. Even the Ecce Homo of Correggio seemed a strange association with a mystery of ancient days. The unchanging hills, and the solemn presence of their fir-woods, seemed a fit enough background. They were all as of old; but we almost wished for the ancient conduct of the scene, as if that too had been as solemn and as unchanging. Having eyes and notions much accustomed and attached to mosaic and MSS., and the ancient documents of Christian art, we would gladly have been reminded of them by the representations of the fall of Noah, of Abraham and Isaac,

¹ The colours used in some of the dresses appeared to us painfully raw and ill-matched, though in some (as St. John's) great pictures had been anxiously followed. It was right, doubtless, that St. Mary Magdalene should wear a saffron robe; but the violent yellow need not have been opposed to dark green or blue.

of Daniel and Jonah. Yet the representations were there, and the law and history of Israel were set forth once more to the people as foreshowing the Gospel. Each scene of the Passion was preceded by its typical scene from Hebrew history, expounded in recitative or choric hymn, with noble voices and modest gesture; and the argument was still the humanity of God for man's sake, to atone for and do away with evil. Its logical gist, so to speak, was exactly that of Bishop Wilson's first chapter on the Holy Communion, reasoning from the fall to sacrifice for sin, and from that to the conclusive sacrifice. And though their mediæval quaintness was gone (probably to most people's satisfaction), the silent tableaux of the Old Testament had a vigour and originality of their own. Some of the more crowded scenes, as the two of the brazen serpent, reminded us of the multitudinous pictures of ancient German art (to be seen in the galleries of Munich and Nuremberg), where the canvas is heaped with faces and expressions. They must have employed a very large part of the infant population of Ober-Ammergau; and the perfect success of all of them showed a combination of high training, discipline and enthusiasm, which we must take leave to attribute (along with the general honesty and high character of these mountaineers) to genuine religious feeling. If not "taken out of the world," they seem, as far as man can see, to be kept from much of its evil.

No repetition or imitation of the play can ever be endured in our own time or country, nor indeed can it or ought it to be attempted or insinuated. Its great interest is as a relic of the belief and picturesque teaching of the middle ages; which used acted symbolism as well as painted or carved imagery, to impress history and doctrine on the people, when books and illuminations were only for the few. But we shall go to the middle ages, and they cannot return to us. Yet if we can never again make use of scenic illusion in the service of religion, a great opportunity is now offered us of nationally recognising art as the handmaid of religion; and defining, by example, the right use of mosaic and sculpture in the instructive decoration of St. Paul's Cathedral. These words were first written very shortly after the news (to

ourselves peculiarly sad and distressing) of the death of him whom we can hardly yet call the late Dean. The ties of old pupilage at Oxford, and much kindness for many years on his part, excuse, and demand, some words of regret, even here, for a dead friend tenderly regarded. But those who knew him best may think with us, that the best tribute to a good man departed may be that his survivors take up his thoughts, like an unextinguished torch or a fallen banner, and carry his purposes on towards perfection. It may be said that the completion of his cathedral was the leading hope and wish of Dr. Mansel; exhausted with brain-labour, free from worldly cares, and cold to low ambitions. It remains to be seen how much or how little the British public cares for this work. Those who do care about the tradition, or handing down, of the Faith, will be anxious for, and glad to contribute to, a great pictorial Bible on those walls and vaultings which now stand naked and forlorn in gigantic barrenness, waiting for their clothing of thought and colour.

Few men can pass under the illuminated Bible-histories of St. Mark's without a new inner sense of the unity of the Christian faith. That was taught thus in the principal temple of Venice, the emporium of the mediæval world. It remains to be seen if the merchant princes of the nineteenth century, and the millions whose trade they represent, will also attempt, in their great church, this form of teaching. Much may depend, to them and England, on their decision in this matter.

CHAPTER IV.

THE BASILICA.

I HAVE again to advert to the reasons for placing an account of Christian art in the catacombs, before undertaking the subject of the Christian Basilica, King's House, Dominica, Lord's House, or Church: all which words convey the same idea. It is true that in theory architecture, the plain building or making of anything comes first; sculpture, or the ornamental modification (in the first instance) of constructive forms, next; and painting or addition of colour last: it is true that they all run into each other, and among them form a constructive, decorative, and graphic science. But, chronologically speaking, the first dwellings the Christian Church could call her own were not buildings,^{*} and could only be decorated in colour. Or it might be said that the sarcophagus and altar-tomb, as hewn in the soft rock, are the Church's architecture and sculpture; and, if it be so, an account of the former has been already given.

As in the Pheidian age, we had to deal not only with a stone but, generally speaking, a marble architecture, its sculpture took the lead of its painting, and was found inseparable, as a subject, from its building. The colour-work of the cemeteries is inseparable from their construction, because its composition and pattern depends on their vaultings. The cavernous or burrowed arch and vault anticipate the Roman, round, or built arch. We now begin again, however, with Græco-Roman

^{*} The use of private Basilicas will be noticed immediately; they were secular buildings *lent* to the Church, not of her own construction.

columns and entablatures, and the well-known facts that heathen temples were in the first place, intolerable, as well as unattainable as places of Christian worship for the first three centuries and more; in the second place, that they were not fitted to accommodate, sometimes not able to contain, the large numbers of a Christian congregation in a great city like Rome, Antioch, or Alexandria. Consequently the great public basilicæ were sought for when the Church became an imperial institution, and the various meanings of the word Basilica now claim our attention. This is one of those terms which are recognised as landmarks of history. They are in some respect like those works of art which are evidently connected with the circumstances or character of a period. Both are often of uncertain dates, like the Laocoon and other great sculptures. We know a Greek must have carved them; but whether he lived in Rhodes before Virgil's time, or in Rome under Titus, is not so certain. We really cannot say if that great group was carved after the description in the Second Book of the *Æneid*, or if Virgil's imagination was inspired by the marble. The sculpture is a kind of doubtful manuscript record—there is writing upon it which might belong to an earlier or later age. But the word Basilica really is a palimpsest MS. in itself; for successive periods and races have written different meanings on it. It means one kind of building in Athens, that is to say, in the Athens of Socrates and Plato. It is in still more frequent and important use in the Rome of Augustus, and means the same kind of building, applied, on the whole, to the same purposes, with changes of detail. Then, after Constantine, the importance of the word is greatest of all: but the building it denotes has gone through a startling change in purpose and dedication; while, as to its actual structure, as an edifice, it is literally turned outside in, as Mr. Fergusson's *History of Architecture* admirably points out. Still it is called Basilica, Basilike Stoa, the porch or Colonnade—the Vestibule of the King. As representing the Christian Church, the word at length corresponds to its derivation, and reaches its highest glory.

Let us try to follow it from its oldest Athenian meaning (in Plato's *Charmides* and elsewhere) of the colonnade or cloister particularly belonging to the "King" Archon, the second magistrate of Athens.¹ First, however, I wish my readers would again consider (with the help of Archbishop Trenchard and Professor Max Müller) how strangely words and expressions bear witness to history by their change of meaning. Apart from Holy Scripture, our chief inheritance of thought and art comes through the dead or classical languages; and that is why these historical words are chiefly Greek and Latin. They have had more *time* than our own Teutonic derivatives; a greater number of literary ages has used them, and they are still repeated all over Europe. Geometry, Astronomy, Physics, Ethics, Logic, Theology. What have not these words meant since Thales, or Socrates, or Plato, or Euclid? But they are in use all over the world, and will be to the end of time.

Nothing can give better practice to any student of history than to follow some wayworn substantive through all historical changes, for good or evil, and trace it back to its original purity; or, perhaps, to its comparative insignificance, when Athens or Argos first coined it. Much more, when the said substantive is the name of something the world still possesses and values, and makes use of every day, with more or less consciousness of its historical ancestry, of the honour of age which belongs to the thing and its name. The very name Basilica is venerable, to those who are capable of veneration, and who will be careful in historical selection of what they ought to venerate. It is easy to compare this architectural term with brick and stone basilicas of our own day. One can hardly enter a church without being reminded of the word; and it is through this word that the pillars and aisles of every well-built church carry us back to temples of ancient days and creeds outworn. It leads us to see what skill of architecture and sculpture we have inherited from


¹ Plato, *Charmides*, c. i. "I went into the palæstra of Taureas, which is over against the temple adjoining the porch of the King Archon."—τὴν καταντικρὺ τοῦ τῆς Βασιλικῆς ἱεροῦ.

Greeks and Romans. We have lost much, no doubt, and much we have resigned. Most of us honestly prefer Gothic, or what we call Gothic, French, English, or Italian, for all the purposes we hold dearest or highest. Nevertheless, we have all a general notion, and a very correct one, that Greece taught Rome to build and carve, and that Rome taught the barbaric world of our own forefathers. By "Greece" I mean Athens in the first place, Constantinople in the second. Athens taught Rome up to the days of Augustus. The two Romes, Old and New, taught our fathers after Constantine. By Rome, I mean Old Rome of the Seven Hills, and also the city of Constantine, contemporaneously. Our ancestors were some of the best pupils in the world, admiring, inventive, unresting, full of their own imagination and love of beauty; but pupils they were, to Rome and to Greece. In the constructive part of architecture Rome taught them her round arch and dome. For architectural sculpture, the followers of the Lombard Alboin began to learn it from Græco-Roman ruins in the seventh century. Then, with the earliest or Etrurian Renaissance in the twelfth century, Nicholas of Pisa found his way back to the ancient models of Athens; when the bas-relief of the Chase of Meleager came home with the long galleys of his city, and he saw, having long followed the Neo-Greek or Byzantine teaching, what ancient Greece had done. Again, it is of chief interest and importance for us, as Gothic Christians, to take note how the working, the needs, and the associations of the conquering Faith have moulded the ideas of ancient builders. The Church seems to have adopted ideas and models of construction, rather than occupied heathen buildings. She probably took possession of but few Pagan temples, and Christians were readier to imitate the constructive form of the secular Basilicas for their own uses, than to lay hands on them as they were. Temple and Basilica were alike dedicated to the false gods, and before the false gods the brethren had again and again been tortured and slain. Decius and Diocletian tore to fragments and burnt to ashes, and did that which was permitted them. The history and associations of the Faith in Constantine's day would be likely to

incline Christians to build for themselves, by preference rather than enter into the architectural labours of heathen who had not heard the name of Christ, or of Pagans who had heard and hated.

By the beginning of the fourth century, as we know from Tertullian in particular, the earlier Christian dread and detestation of every idol and graven image was about at its height. Tertullian went back to ancient days of Rome (which, in all probability, were not in his day beyond reach of record), when "the idol did not exist—the courts were empty and the shrines undwelt in . . . until the devil brought in makers of statues and images, and all kinds of likenesses, on mankind—and all the rudiments of man's misery, and the name of Idols, followed." (*De Idolatria*, c. iii.) This is spoken against the Paganism of the past, without the faintest suspicion of any internal idolatry of the future. Perhaps no Christian *representative* image existed in his day. But his words show the pure iconoclasm of the early Church, founded on the Second Commandment. In all Christian churches of the first two centuries, perhaps most of all in Rome, the Hebraic element of the Church, remembering their Temple wherein was no image or similitude, must have differed in feeling from Greeks, who had perhaps worshipped Athene at Athens, Diana at Ephesus, or even Aphrodite at Corinth. The Second Commandment bound all Christians.

But what was more, they had actually had to combat to death with the Pagan Empire on that point, and the scene of such battle had generally been the Basilicas. There the prætor sat in his duty, to deal with the Nazarene. Do not let us imagine him according to the descriptions of mediæval legend, as a grinning ogre or hornless demon; let us think of him as of the school of Gallio and Seneca, of Pliny or Aurelius. He would be there, indifferent and vexed with the day's work, or sad and stern, meaning to strike down whatever presumed to stand against the will of Cæsar. Nor on the other hand can I quite admit the commonplaces of modern literature about the sufferers. They were of all sorts; and many at times fell away; but they cannot be got rid of with the words, fanaticism and hysterics. We will put



first the sad succession, long or short, of the poor Lapsi, scandal to the brethren, mockery to the delator and the persecutor. There were rich Christians, denounced by their own slaves; maidens who had not been pliant to Pagan lovers; every one whose death or misery a Pagan could desire; some stood in the trial, some reeled, some fell. The fallen had to separate from the enduring. Many, or nearly all, would go so far as to say, "Away with the Atheists"—like S. Polycarp, who said it with a groan, and avowedly in his own sense; but the next command was to swear by the life of Cæsar, to revile Christ, and to do sacrifice. The altar of the central apse was before them; a sprinkling of incense might be held enough; and now, who would call on Christ in that hour, and on none else? If some failed and sacrificed to Cæsar or his gods, some did not; and their faith proved something, while the frailty of their brethren proved nothing. But pitiable as the Lapsi, the fallen brethren, were, they did not supply any ridiculous element to relieve the scene of blood, and magnificence, and imposture, and horror. That was supplied, since it seems that such scenes must always have such features, by the false gods in person. Their images were borne in state into the Basilicas to be adored once more by fallen Christians, and to see the vengeance Rome inflicted in their cause on recusants.¹ There is a pleasing passage by Mr. Thackeray about the Christian mob smashing the fair, calm faces of the Greek gods in Constantine's day. I do not suppose the pagan mob of Diocletian's or Nero's time cared very much about the helpless marble "signa" as they were carried before the prætor, nodding and swaying, and staring with blank eyes on their friends and foes alike. They were to be present, and see themselves asserted and avenged on the new superstition; and what can we suppose that the philosophic præfects and judges thought of them? Their position was not that of zealots or enthusiasts. It may be said of Christian persecutions in after days that they were generally conducted by men who earnestly believed doctrines of their own, for which they themselves would have suffered, and sometimes did suffer, whereas we cannot think that Pliny believed much in Apollo

¹ See Pliny Junior's 97th Epistle. *Restoration of Belief*, pp. 69, 70.

and Aphrodite ; and he certainly went through nothing in their names, except the doubt and shame of persecuting on their behalf.

Accordingly, Christians who remembered persecution must have had distressing associations with the large legal basilicas, and would be likely to prefer building for themselves when they could. Anybody who will walk through the Royal Exchange will easily understand what the open or public part of an early Greek basilica was like. There is no apse there, the whole available space beside the nave being employed for small rooms and shops ; the colonnade, or walled-in peristyle, is the main thing. And this may bring us to the real beginning of our subject, which seems to branch out into the following questions—the first, for Londoners, is partly answered :—

First—What was the earlier Greek or Roman business-basilica like ?

Secondly—Were there any rooms or buildings called by this name in the hands of Christians from the first to the fourth century ?

Thirdly—What was one of those places like in Constantine's time ? and how did it change architecturally in or about Justinian's ?

Fourthly—Was there any other type of Christian churches, and what was that like ?

It is the hard condition of this book to have to do without plans or pictures. Think of a colonnade, or stoa, or porch, or Greek cloister, generally in the oblong-square form. (There were round ones, but we must delay description of round temples or churches.) In Professor Poynter's picture of *Atalanta*, the race for her hand is coming off under one of them.

In Roman days, at all events, people did have long colonnades, paved or unpaved, for sheltered walks or rides, and all Italian travellers will remember the arcaded streets of so many cities on both sides of the Alps, and the picturesque crowds which cluster and buzz like hived bees beneath their shade. A basilica was part of a forum or open space for public business, and Vitruvius gives directions about one,

saying it should be on the sunny or sheltered side of the forum, as meant for protection in bad weather. When its columns surrounded a space, the term peristyle, or columns-all-round, would apply to it; and it might have a roof, or be hypæthral, that is to say, not have one. The Porch of Solomon, on the east side of the Temple at Jerusalem, was a long colonnade or cloister, with entrance gates, and an atrium or vestibule in the middle of it, which is now the walled-up Golden Gate. Here men walked for exercise or conversation, particularly in the winter; here were the goodly stones of Herod, or indeed of Solomon—here, about the doors, would be the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who sold doves.

In short, the earliest Greek form of the basilica might be associated with the Greek Temple, its latest development was the type of the Christian Church. In Lord Lindsay's *Christian Art* there is an admirable comparison between the Church and the older secular building, which will be given hereafter and which shows the natural transition (with or without change of name) of every part into its new employment. Let us repeat a little about Greek temples.

In the first place, *Templum* or *Temenos*, which is the same word in Greek, means, in the first instance, a place and not a building. It is a very curious feature of language that this word should, from its origin, point to a local presence and special habitation of a special Deity, while the Teutonic word *Church* means in fact the assembly of the Lord's people, the synagogue or congregation of the Lord; indicating that He is present *wherever* they are gathered together. However, "*templum*" means a consecrated space, separated by augur's marks, or actually fenced off. Men chose out such a place for the dwelling of a god, because they believed in a local presence of him there. Apollo really was supposed to live at Delphi, as the Archbishop of Canterbury lives at Lambeth. He might or might not be at home to his worshippers, and his oracles might or might not be what they wished; but that, or Delos, or Dodona were good places to find him, and if he wasn't in one he might be in another. Zeus lived at Olympia more often than elsewhere, Artemis had a regular

house of Idæus, and so of all the inferior gods and the demi-monde of Olympus. The essence of a Greek shrine or *naos*—the actual building—was that the god had been seen there, or loved the spot. It was human, it was natural to think so. But in the first instance, whatever building was done there was for the god only. A very small *naos* often sufficed, sometimes only a hollow tree, and there was very little accommodation for worshippers, in old days, in the earlier temples. This specially holy place would get surrounded with walls; then it had its porch and pediment, supported by columns, and *anta* or side-walls. Then as the fame of the god waxed great, there would be sacrifices to be done, and larger numbers of people would come to appear before him. He really could hear what one said there; so the whole building would be inclosed in a peristyle, and that, too, have its front and pediment, and perhaps be partly walled-in also. So we get the type of the Parthenon, the most famous of all classic buildings, or, indeed, of all buildings of "merely human" design. In saying this, I do not say that Greek is better than Gothic, but that Greek came before Gothic. I do not say that Phidias was a better man than Nicholas of Pisa, but that Phidias came first, and Niccola was glad to learn of him and his. Gothic is far better for the North; but, on the whole, the North has learnt from the South, not *vice versa*. But this seems a distinction worth remembering: that the heathen asserted a local and material presence for his god, while the Christian is guided by belief in universal, spiritual presence with the worshipper anywhere. "Heaven is My throne, and earth is My footstool; what is the place of My rest?" That is the answer to all thoughts of binding the Deity to local presence; but, on the other hand, He is assuredly present with every two or three brethren that are gathered together, and with all who pray to Him. Once, it is true, and for a time, there was a local Presence on the Hill of Sion which He loved. But that was for a special purpose and an appointed time, and the Holy Place was for one Name only. Nevertheless, in that God did make choice by revelation of a special place, and give that place in charge to a family sprung from one ancestor, a family or race;—there is

analogy between the Temple of the true God in Sion and the idea or principle of Greek local worship.

The Parthenon, then, whatever else it was, was a peristyle which inclosed a larger and a smaller chamber, with two great fronts, east and west. Others had an annexe or treasury at the back ; and in these three divisions of temple-space we have the rudiments of nave, choir, and chancel. There was no preaching, nor any long service of congregational prayer ; so that the temple provided little shelter for the people : and indeed in the climate of Attica they might generally be content if it shaded them from the sun, and be tolerably independent of walls in all their public buildings. But the climate of Rome is very different, and the business of the Roman Forum came to be incessant, multitudinous, and full of long debates. Also the noise of the Forum was tremendous at times. Horace says the funerals were the worst ; Juvenal complains of the rolling of wheels : at all events, thick walls were necessary if much work was to be got through. And so the Greek temple, or peristyle-basilica, got walled in. Sometimes a wall was carried from pillar to pillar ; but where there was space enough, or where new basilicas had to be built, it would be natural to build a lower wall, give it a side-roof leaning against the outer cornice, and inclose the pillars. This, at all events, was done in later times, with some of the churches which appear to have been converted from secular or heathen use. Two excellent examples, of an oblong-square and also of a round church thus made, will be found in Seroux d'Agincourt's *Histoire de l'Art par les Monuments* ; and they are reproduced in Smith's *Dictionary of Christian Antiquities* under the word "Church." ¹ But anybody who will think of an oblong-square colonnade, round an open quadrangle, covered in, will get an idea of the first formation of the Roman basilica-proper for secular work. Two side-roofed aisles, each like the older colonnade and a wider open space between ; roof that in with a great barrel-vault, and you have the place of business. Then you add

¹ "Basilica of Reparatus," p. 372, and "S. Stefano Rotondo, Rome," p. 373. For change of round temples into baptisteries, see D'Agincourt, *Archit.*, plate lxi., and Lord Lindsay's *Hist. of Art*, vol. i, and next chapter.

galleries above the pillars, and side-rooms *ad libitum*, as you build and rebuild, and as more space is required.

2. This, then, is the type of the Augustan age: that is to say, of the Primitive Church. Meanwhile the name basilica had come into common use for any kind of large oblong hall supported by pillars, or anyhow divided into aisles. Such halls there were in the great houses of consular and senatorial families; and we owe a most interesting memorial of such a place to Mr. J. H. Parker. Many who read this will have seen or heard of some of his lectures, pamphlets, and photographs on the House of Pudens.¹ The great value of such writings is that you have the photographs to refer to at every step, and they are original documents; it is like being there and being told where to look, seeing the actual bricks and stones in their places. There do assuredly remain those walls of first and second century brickwork, which once inclosed a large hall on the basement floor; and I cannot see why we should dispute, or wish to dispute, the probability of its having been once the principal church of Roman Christians in the house of Pudens. If so, it is our type of the private or domestic church of the first days, and shows us at once how the word basilica came to have exactly the same meaning as the word dominica, Latin for church.

It is to the cubicula of the catacombs that we must look to understand what the earliest places of prayer and Eucharistic Celebration were like. All questions about walls and windows, whether our chief ornamental colour is to be bestowed on our glass, or on our solid walls, really depend on whether the particular church in question is architecturally derived from the underground chapel or the open-air basilica. Our present point is that there was a church, basilica, or large private hall, divided into aisles by pillars, in the palace of Pudens, sometime senator of Rome; that S. Paul probably ministered there; at all events, that he mentioned the Domus, or rather Titulus Pudentis, as his Roman converts would have called it; and that part of that very palace now remains in the eastern walls of the church of S. Pudenziana.

¹ See *supra*, p. 88.

Let us clear our minds at once of that general spirit of suspicion about popular Roman relics, which the energy of the Jesuit order has compelled every sane person to feel more or less. We have no motive for disputing the authenticity of these remains. We have every wish, and may well avow it, to believe that they are authentic; they are unquestionably *there*, and Mr. Parker's photograph is as good as our going there too. If we "go into the case," the only reason I know for being incredulous about it, is that it is so very tempting and nice to believe it in every detail. Though it is a hard thing, it must be said, that in all matters of private judgment, it is decidedly wrong and sinful to "go in for" believing a thing because one likes it; or to tamper with one's own mirror of truth. The shield of Faith was given us to be kept bright, and no good ever came or ever will come of painting things upon it.

This story begins far from Rome, among the wild Silures, with Carâdoc or Caractacus; and it will always connect Britain and its earliest Church with Rome and her memories, and specially with that great document which is chief among them, the Letter of the Apostle of the Gentiles.

"Carâdoc,¹ son of Brân, say the ancient Triads of Welsh Druidism, whom every Briton, from the king to the peasant, followed when he lifted his spear to battle," raised his spear for the last time against Rome, late in the 52nd year A.D., between the Teme and the Clune, in Shropshire. His wife and his daughter Gladys, destined to strange commemoration alike by Martial and St. Paul (if she be the Claudia of 2 Tim. iv. 21), are borne to the camp of Uriconium;² and Carâdoc is betrayed at Caer-Esroc, or York, by the false queen of the Brigantes.³ He is conveyed to Rome, by order of Claudius, with all his house, with sons and sons' children, say the Triads, "with Brân, his father, and Llyn (Linus), the father of Brân." There he delivered himself, every schoolchild knows how; and though what he said has been vulgarised in after days, Tacitus thought it worth reporting. It is true; and it will remain till

¹ See a most interesting book, happily of readable size—the Rev. R. W. Morgan's *S. Paul in Britain*, 12mo. Parker, 1861.

² Urechean—the Wrekin—Wroxeter.

³ Arêgwedd or Aricia, called Cartismunda, by Tacitus.

the end of the name of Rome or of England. "Its spirit," says Mr. Morgan, "reminded Claudius of the old republican times of the Camilli, the Cincinnati, the Catones—a spirit long since extinct." So it was, at all events, that Claudius did spare Carâdoc's life and his family's—quite against the rule of a Roman triumph, which always implied a butchery of captive kings and generals at the end.

Claudius seems to have been capable of acts of justice and mercy; and it is probable that intercessions may have been made by the family and interest of Aulus Plautius, late Roman Governor of Britain. Mr. Morgan identifies his wife, Pomponia Græcina, with another Gladys, sister of Carâdoc, who was afterwards accused of "foreign superstitions," A.D. 57, and acquitted (*Tac. Ann.* xiii. 32), though she lived long afterwards in austere melancholy. The family of Rufus were certainly a branch of her house, and they were represented among the Roman Christians, A.D. 58, by "Rufus, chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine," *Rom.* xvi. 13.

Be this as it may, Carâdoc's life was spared, and he was only compelled to remain seven years in Rome, in free custody of surveillance, like S. Paul. Gladys, his daughter, was adopted by Claudius, and easily assumed his family name; thenceforth she was Claudia. "Carâdoc," says Mr. Morgan, "took up his residence in the Palatium Britannicum, on the other side of the Mons Sacer; converted afterwards by his grand-daughter, Claudia Pudentiana, into the first Christian church at Rome, known first as the Titulus Pudentis, and now as S. Pudenziana. Here the nuptials of Claudia and Rufus Pudens Pudentinus were celebrated, A.D. 53. As far as we can collect, Claudia, at her marriage with Rufus, was in her seventeenth year."

Now this marriage of Claudia, the stranger, peregrina, and Rufus Pudens is, beyond doubt, celebrated by Martial in the thirteenth epigram of his fourth book of epigrams. It ends in two most charming lines, wishing that she may love him long hence, when he is old, but that he may never be able to see that she has grown old with him. And he writes another epigram (xi. 53) in praise of her, saying, the daughter of the fair-haired Britons has the heart of the Latian race,

on the birth of her daughter Pudentiana, about four years after.¹ There is no reason to doubt the happy marriage of this pair, or that they lived in the great house of Pudens. Of course the possible connection between S. Paul and Britain, which may have existed through their means, is deeply interesting, and may be studied in Mr. Morgan's book. The house itself, or what is left of its basilica, or hall of meeting, is all that we can deal with here. The Roman martyrology says the ordinary household consisted of 200 male and 200 female servants, all bred on the estates of Pudens in Umbria. Let us hope they soon found that hereditary servitude under Christian masters in Rome was a very different position from that of a fettered *familia rustica*. But the story of some such establishment is consistent with the great extent of the traditional ruins.

The brethren met in the vaulted cellars during persecution, and in the basilica above at ordinary times; and we have, in the subterranean church of refuge, as in the catacomb chapels, the type of our long, massive, round-arched and vaulted early English buildings. So, again, the fair Basilica above develops into our later Gothic.

Pictures we have none: but those whom the world has not altogether deprived of the use of their imaginations may consider the earlier and the later meetings of the church of the house of Pudens. We can really, perhaps, with a little help from Piloty's, or Gérôme's, or Alma Tadema's pictures, set some faint image of the scene before us. There were earlier and happier times, soon over, before Pomponia Græcina had stood trial for the faith and escaped death, perhaps by some long-repented lapse. There were the senators in white robes and purple stripes, and the orderly

¹ It is hard to get over the coincidence, that S. Timothy and Martial both had three friends of the same name in the same place, and so near the same time. It must be observed, further, that Linus (mentioned 2 Tim. iv. 21, between Pudens and Claudia, is also mentioned by Martial, in various epigrams, i. 76, ii. 54, iv. 13, &c., see Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*). Mr. Morgan says he is Lyn, another son of Caradoc. It will hardly do to say that because the word Sanctus is applied by Martial to the husband of Claudia, he was then a Christian. He might have become so before A.D. 57, when S. Paul mentions him. From Martial, his morals, and indeed Linus's, seem to have been rather Roman than Christian at one time.

household of Umbrian slaves—everywhere white tunics and swarthy limbs and faces ; the strong body of yet darker Hebrews and Oriental Greeks ; the golden heads of the beautiful Britoness, and her two or three kindred, yet robed in the splendour of a senatorial house, but preparing for the trial unto death, which they must have even then apprehended. Imagine all these heads, rude or fierce, lofty or lovely, bowed low to hear the good news of God ; and that, from one of weak bodily presence and contemptible oratory, who may have seemed to them a Syrian ready to perish, like his great ancestor, and who yet bore with him that word which should not only subvert all the Empire and its order, but subdue the future conquerors of Rome. Such scenes undoubtedly did take place in many a Basilica of the first three centuries.

CHAPTER V.

THE BASILICA.

THOUGH they have often been explained before—for everybody who writes or talks about the later Roman Empire finds it necessary to do so—it seems best to dwell a little on the words Greek, Roman, Byzantine, and Romanesque, if only to clear one's mind of the confusion in which they are involved by being used differently in every book one reads. These four adjectives are applied to the three kindred arts of Architecture, Sculpture, and Painting, in every possible branch and detail. The two former have three or four definite meanings each ; the two latter are in fact undefined, and not properly separated from each other, because nobody has yet constructed a good system of distinction, with a clear set of examples, in works actually existing, and verified by photograph. Mr. Freeman's *Sketches* contain excellent and complete information on this and other points relating to the Basilica-Church, but some account of our own is wanted in this place.

Greek art, then, architectural or other, means, in its first meaning, Athenian or Argive ; the art of the Parthenon ; in its second, the same, as distinguished by its lintels and horizontal ornament from the Roman vaultings and round arches. In its third sense, from Constantine to Niccola Pisano, it means Neo-Greek art, or the composite and decadent system called Byzantine-proper. In its fourth sense, to this day, it means such imitation and reproduction of the old Attic beauty and power as the modern world has been able to

effect. All Greek work is horizontal: that is to say, it calls attention chiefly to horizontal lines.

Then, Roman art, as opposed to Greek, means the great constructive system of cupola vaultings; the round arch and its great supporting piers. It is the art of the Pantheon. In all its decorative detail, it makes use of Greek ornament; misapplied and spoiled for the most part. In and after the time of Constantine it means art as practised at Constantinople, in precisely the same degree as it does art practised at Rome. After its great masters of the Italian Renaissance, from Brunelleschi to Bramante, it means Italian, or anything you please, from the Procuratie Vecchie to Gower Street, N.W. It is as horizontal as it can manage, honestly piling story on story and flat on flat; but the arches and vaults and their great perspectives begin to soar and sweep the eye upwards, and mount it must and will. Nevertheless the Roman remembers his Greek perspectives, and puts a grand entablature on his columns, and an attic on the top of an order of them whenever he can—as particularly in our own basilica of St. Paul's. Fourthly, and finally, Rome and Roman mean Constantinople and its adjective, in the East and in Russia; while in the West they refer to the City of the Seven Hills.

Then for the other two words: Byzantine means Græco-Roman art as practised in Byzantium, from the foundation of the city till 1463; and as taught by Byzantium, through the Schola Græca of the seventh and eighth centuries, to Old Rome and the whole Empire, north, south, east, and west. It is found at Mount Sinai, in the Convent of the Transfiguration, where I have seen mosaics of Justinian's time, with his portrait and Theodora's; it is all through the Egyptian and Syrian churches; it is at Ravenna, Torcello, and Venice; it is on the Rhine and in England. Its ornament is always more or less easily traced back to ancient Athens, and may be called Græco-Byzantine. Construction is Roman or Græco-Roman, wherever the cupola and round arch are used. The work of ancient Greece, and of modern Byzantine Greece alike, takes the name of Rome, whether it be the Rome of Constantine or of Romulus.

Lastly, when Græco-Roman art found barbarian pupils of vigorous mind, keen senses, and good natural appreciation of beauty, as the Italians, Lombards, and ultramontane Franks, they began to imitate it with a fertility of invention which has astonished the world from their day to ours. The Italians had the immeasurable advantage of being led back, by Niccola Pisano, to the study of ancient or Attic-Greek sculpture; and the supremacy of Pisan and Florentine drawing rests unquestionably on that discipline of theirs. It is at Pisa and Florence also that we have the rarest examples of Christian adaptation of the Greek round temple, or circular Basilica, as it is sometimes called.¹ Lombard or Frank Romanesque (the first for choice) means Græco-Roman art as pursued by the noblest barbarian or Teutonic races.² They began soon after Alboin's followers had settled in Italy—from 568 to the end of the sixth century. Seventh-century churches, or parts of them, are still standing, which give us an idea of the first inventive efforts of the Lombard builders in the way of sculpture. There is a capital note about them in the Appendix to *The Stones of Venice*, vol. i., where I think the Lombard carver is likened to "a tiger in a state of active indigestion, walking about in a stone den with a hammer and chisel, recording his nightmares, and striking out a fresh fancy on the wall at every step.' And three-and-twenty years ago I remember one of the foremost poets and artists of our time being compared in Oxford to this description of the typical Lombard. It nowise put him out—and it was very like.

The Basilica then was adopted and adapted by all church-builders, East and West. The Eastern Church made its own magnificent addition of the fourfold hall and the central dome—whereof in due time. Their principle of arrangement was the same as of old. The altar of the Basilica was at the end, where the heathen altar had been, only with the confessio

¹ Diotisalvi was the architect of the Baptistry of Pisa. Its form seems to connect the Monument of Lysicrates and the Temple of the Winds at Athens with the Roman Temples of Vesta: and so on to the Christian Baptisteries of Ravenna, Florence, and Pisa.

² For excellent studies on the Northern Romanesque, see Mr. Freeman's *Sketches*.

containing the relics of saint or martyr, either beneath or before it. The ideas of Holy Communion on the tomb of the departed, and of the faithful dead under the altar, prevail throughout. While the naves and aisles of our churches, in their wide extent and decent magnificence, bear witness to the power, the endurance, the universality of the Church of Christ, the east end and altar remind us always of the Sacrifice of the Lord for all men, and in a measure, of His saints' endurance for Him. All through the ages of persecution, the minds of the faithful were drawn more and more to the Apocalypse, to the coming of their Lord. At intervals, greater or smaller, spirits departed, by sword, fire, and lions, to join the company of those under the altar (Rev. vi. 9), the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held. It was human and most natural to symbolise their rest and expectation, either by raising the catacomb-altar over the martyr's body, or by placing his translated relics under statelier vaultings below the apse, or the arch of triumph, of the Basilica. Indeed, in the earlier middle ages, the presence of some relic or other was necessary to the consecration of an altar.

A very interesting instance of modern verification of such burial as this took place a few years ago in the Church of S. Ambrogio at Milan.¹ My uncle, the late Father Ambrose St. John, of the Oratory at Birmingham, one of Dr. Newman's nearest friends, was present at the temporary exhumation, from under the altar, of a skeleton which had been that of S. Ambrose, almost beyond doubt or question. But besides those remains, with their intense interest, there were found beneath them two other skeletons of large stature; in both of which the skull appeared to have been cut or hacked from the spine. They were, and are, in all human probability, the bones of SS. Gervasius and Protasius; or, whether these names be correct or not, of the martyrs over whom the original Basilica was dedicated, June 19, 387. Milan is, happily, far enough from Rome to have escaped the systematic plunder and relic-removing which has deprived

¹ See Dr. Newman's *Historical Sketches*, note, p. 433, ed. Bohn.

so many sacred monuments in the Eternal City of their historical authenticity and authority.

The following account of the arrangement of a Christian Basilica, in broad ideal outline, is based on Lord Lindsay's *Christian Art*, vol. i. I have added synonymous or nearly synonymous terms, under considerable difficulties, arising chiefly from my own ignorance ; which consultation of authorities does not always materially diminish.

I. The court of entrance and vestibule ; the pronaos, or atrium, if it formed a part of the inner building. If a portico (attached or unattached to the main building), it would be called the narthex or scourge, and be the place of penitents excluded from the nave. It answered in some sense, when left open, to the Court of the Gentiles in the Jewish Temple ; and, in heathen life, to the forum or place of meeting outside the Basilica. S. Mark's Square at Venice is a capital illustration of the outer court or forum ; and of the atrium or vestibule, as a part of the church itself. In this case the Procuratie Vecchie and Nuove, the colonnades round the square, take the place of the portico for catechumens and penitents.

II. The centre aisle or body of the church and place of assembly for the people. It is called occasionally gremium, the bosom of the church ; more frequently the nave, or ship of safety ; and answers to the prodromus, or larger chamber, of a Greek temple. It had often triforia, or galleries for women, as the secular Basilica had its upper corridors and rooms. The frieze and walls above the pillars of the nave and below its windows were often clad with mosaics.

III. The cancellum, chorus, or choir, for singers and inferior clergy, slightly raised and railed off. Sometimes called the ambon,¹ from ἀναβαίνειν, to ascend ; or the *suggestum*, a raised space ; our own word, *chancel*, is derived from the *cancelli*, or railings.

IV. The hierateium or hieron bema, or sanctuary, answering to the tribune within the apse of the original

¹ The pulpits or desks are generally understood by the term "ambon" ; they would be placed here, as the best place for hearing.

Basilica. In its centre stood the altar under a canopy, afterwards called a baldacchino.¹ The arch between this and the choir was called the Arch of Triumph. It typified the passage from earth to heaven in death, and was generally adorned with mosaics of apocalyptic subject, as in S. Prassede at Rome, where the twenty-four elders are represented in white raiment against a golden ground of light, casting their crowns before the Lord in glory. Round the altar were seats for the clergy and a throne for the bishop: at Torcello it is placed at the centre behind the altar, and the bishop sits as pilot of the nave, *navis*, or temple-ship. Lord Lindsay calls this sanctuary the transept, but the use of the word is rather confusing to those who are accustomed to markedly cruciform churches. The Chalcidice or transept proper is the horizontal end of the Basilica, between the body and the apse.

V. Then the crypt beneath the sanctuary, with the confessio, the tomb or shrine containing relics of the patron saint and others. This was beneath the altar, as in the Apocalypse. In many instances, where a large Basilica was built over a smaller subterranean church, the latter became the crypt or confessio of the former. (See S. Martin ad Montes at Rome; D'Agincourt, *Arch.* pl. xiv.) It will be seen how the feelings and associations, both of the triumph of the Church and her Master, and of His Passion and the sufferings of the saints, were thus united in constructive symbolism. It is simpler to divide their edifices into aboveground and underground, though Lord Lindsay's threefold classification is very useful. Christian buildings, he says, were, first, baptisteries, generally altered from public baths or round temples, as the Pantheon and S. Stefano Rotondo; secondly, churches for worship and communion, on the type of the Basilica; thirdly, sepulchral chapels for commemorative prayer or service, on the catacomb type. Though we began with the Greek Basilica, the construction certainly originated in the East, since the ruins of Thebes contain its earliest examples. But as, even to the present day, the Eastern as well as the Western capital of

¹ As in S. John Lateran at Rome, where the use was for the priest to celebrate with his face towards the people.

the old Roman Empire has been called Rome, the Basilica form has been called and considered the Roman fashion (*mos Romanus*) from the days of Charles the Great. One of the best examples of the simplest form of Basilica is that Emperor's restoration of the Church of the *Vicus Saxonum* in Rome.¹

Beyond the Alps the German and Norman builders were then preparing to reproduce the effects they had learnt to delight in in their wooden churches, and to imitate their grouped and clustered tree-trunks in stone; to raise their vaultings towards heaven, like their remembered forest-roofs; to desire to look up to vertical lines and crossed ribs of moulding, as their fathers had looked up always to green intersecting arches of the woodland. Nevertheless they retained their delight in horizontal perspectives, as all seeing people must; and enjoyed a long and level succession of vertical pillars. For good Gothic, with its true capitals and cornices, still retains the sweeping lines of Greece, and is true to the Pentelic rock from which it was hewn so many ages ago.

It is unfortunate that Eusebius of Cæsarea's description of the cathedral of Tyre (book x. chapter iv., *History of the Church*) is vague in the extreme. It cannot appear to us, though he says it did to him, "superfluous to describe the dimensions, the length and the breadth, the skilful architectural arrangement, and the exceeding beauty of each of the parts" of the building. Beyond enthusiasm at its magnificence, all we gather from him, speaking in presence of its builder, Paulinus, Bishop of Tyre, is that (as may be supposed) it resembled a Greek temple in its lofty propylon, outer precinct, and fourfold colonnades, round a quadrangular inclosure. This contained two fountains, and was latticed within between its columns. There seems to have been an atrium and narthex; as he speaks of "many inner vestibules" and numerous chambers on each side the cathedral—perhaps rather irregularly attached to it. The brazen gates at the eastern end may have belonged to a sanctuary; but we have

¹ See plan, Seroux D'Agincourt's *Histoire de l'Art par les Monuments*, Architecture, planche xxv. 9 and 13.

no real description. Eusebius describes what he had seen, as many enthusiastic persons do, as if all the world had seen it as well. He did not, in fact, see the architecture or the arrangements of the building, so much as the triumph of the Church which it symbolised.

Architecturally speaking, the outside of a Christian Basilica must have been considerably inferior to its inside; and even with a heathen or secular one, the question of decorating the outer wall (unless it were utilised by shops or arcades) must have been difficult. Life-size statues in niches all round are often used; but they generally seem to impress the spectator with the idea of their having been turned out of the building for some misbehaviour. And as they are commonly in oratorical attitudes, they frequently appear to be making a noise outside after their expulsion. Used outside a church, they would infallibly be taken for portraits or personifications of aggrieved parishioners.

The natural wish to have an outside of equal beauty or interest to the inside, led, in after days, both to the system of the Pisan Cathedral and Campanile, of small ornamental colonnades range above range,—and to that glorious study of incrustation, which may be said to begin with the horizontal or barred structure of Pisa (beautifully exemplified in modern Cairo and Damascus), and to culminate in the Campanile of Giotto. It is probable that from the time of S. Paulinus of Nola, the great promoter of symbolical and historic ornament, the fronts, at least, of city churches began to be adorned with instructive sculpture or mosaic. He himself, about the end of the fourth century, thus ornamented his church of S. Felix; and painted a catacomb with Scriptural histories and pictures symbolic of the Holy Trinity.

The little Church of S. Clemente at Rome still remains an almost perfectly preserved example of the inner arrangements of a primitive church. Its plan, and a picture of its interior, is given in D'Agincourt, *Architecture*, pl. xxiv., and it is represented in Gally Knight's *Italian Churches*, and many other books. Its ancient wooden roof is gone, and a small chapel of S. Catherine has been added; but the latter innovation is atoned for by the frescoes of Masaccio. And we are

led in considering the interior arrangements and furniture for Divine Service after the Peace of the Church, to considerations which may have some novelty for many of our readers—the probable derivation of those arrangements from the Synagogue. The inner architectural forms of the Roman Basilica, as has been said so often, were well suited to the order of Christian service, even in detail; and were adopted accordingly. But that order had been settled long before, and a regular system of inner arrangement already existed, which used the Basilica for its purposes, and by no means adapted itself to the Basilica. So much has been said here about Greek architectural features in the primitive Church, that it may be necessary to point out how closely related her services of prayer, praise, and exhortation were to the Hebrew. It is natural; for the Hebrew element was strong in most Christian communities for the first three centuries; and the appeal of the first preachers of the Gospel, as we know, was always to the Law and the Prophets. In the early Roman Church, as Dean Milman says, the Greek language and habits, which prevailed for two hundred years at least, were especially mingled with Hebrew usage. In the synagogue, the ark, or chest containing the Books of the Law and the Prophets, stands furthest from the entrance; in its sanctuary, or holiest place, within the cancelli or bars of separation. The choir is represented by the platform for readers and singers, generally extending down the middle of the building, rather than at its sides. In earlier times this arrangement divided the sexes; though at present, women are generally secluded in low galleries behind lattice-work on each side. Again, the principle of building east and west, and placing the altar eastward, so as to turn the faces of the worshippers in that direction, must be derived from Eastern, if not from Hebrew habit, as the idea of a fixed *kebleh*, or direction, is certainly Oriental. “We have probably the earliest trace of it,” says Mr. Plumptre, “in Psalm xxviii., ascribed to David. It is recognised in the dedication prayer of Solomon (1 Kings vii. 29) and by Daniel (vi. 10) as a fixed rule. Christian orientation probably followed the structure of the synagogue . . . and the Table of the Lord, bearing witness of the Blood of

the New Covenant, took the place of the ark, which contained the Law that was the groundwork of the old." He also notices that the *proto-cathedriæ* or high places at the upper end of the synagogue, so greatly desired by the Pharisees, were represented as early as the time of S. James (Ep. ii. 2, 3) in the Christian churches.

The following directions for the conduct of Divine Service retain decided traces of the Synagogue ritual. They are from the *Apostolical Constitutions* (book ii. c. 57), which are supposed to have been compiled about the fourth century, and which probably contain the *bond-fide* sentiments of the then Churches, as to apostolical order of service. That is to say, they describe the service, as it seemed to the fourth century that S. Peter and S. Paul would have ordered it, to suit the needs of that time.

"Do thou, the bishop (or prelate, as Latimer would have said), when thou gatherest together the Church of God, like the pilot of a great ship, with all knowledge bid them assemble ; directing thy deacons, as sailors, to appoint their proper places to the brethren with all care and respect, as to passengers (*epibatæ*). And first, let the building be oblong, turned to the East, having its stalls (*pastophoria*, small cells) on each side ; for that it is like to a ship. And let the bishop's throne be set in the midst ; and along on either side let the presbytery sit, and let the deacons stand by clad in proper raiment, for they are like sailors and chief rowers. And ordered by their care, let the laymen sit on one side, in all quiet and good order, and the women separately and by themselves, keeping silence. And in the midst let the reader, standing on some elevation, read the Books of Moses, and Joshua the son of Nun, of the Judges and the Kings, of the Paralipomena and the Return ; and besides, those of Job and Solomon, and the Eleven Prophets. And after two readings, let another sing the psalms of David, and the people sing the ends of the verses after him. After that let our Acts be read, and the Epistles of Paul our fellow-worker, which he sent the Churches by direction of the Holy Spirit ; and after that let a deacon or presbyter read the Gospels, which we Matthew and John delivered to you, and

which the fellow-workers of Paul, Luke, and Mark, have received and bequeathed unto you. And while the Gospel is in reading, let all the priests and deacons and all the people stand up in great quiet, for it is written, 'Keep silence, and hear, O Israel,' and again, 'Do thou stand there and hear' (Deut. xxvii. 9, v. 31). And next, let the presbyters exhort the people, one by one and not all at once, and last of all the bishop, as is fitting for the pilot. And let the doorkeepers be placed at the men's entrance, guarding them; and the deaconesses at the women's, like those who take the fare on shipboard (*naustologis*, perhaps they collected the alms). . . . And if any be found sitting out of his place, let him be reproved by the deacon as by a boatswain, *proreus* (we trust not in respect of vehemence of language), and be led to his proper place. For the Church is likened, not only to a ship, but also to a fold. For thus the shepherds range every one of their dumb creatures according to kindred and age, and like with like. So in the ecclesia, let the younger ones sit apart if there be room, and if not, let them stand up; the boys who have got on in age let them sit in order, and the little boys, let their fathers or mothers keep them standing by them, and the young girls apart," &c.

Then strict directions about keeping order; then again as to ritual—

"After this let one and all with one voice, standing up and looking to the East (after the catechumens and the penitents have gone forth) pray to God Who ascended into the heaven of heavens in the East,¹ remembering also the Ancient Garden (a dwelling) of Paradise in the East. . . . And the deacons: after the prayer let some of them attend to the preparation for the offering of the Eucharist, ministering about the Body of the Lord with fear, and let the others look through the multitude and keep silence among them. And let the deacon that stands next to the chief priest say, 'Be here none in enmity, none in falsehood.' Then let the men salute each other and the women each other, with a kiss in the Lord; but none in deceit, as Judas betrayed the Lord with a kiss.

¹ The Mount of Olives is due east from Jerusalem.

And after that let the deacon pray for the one whole Church in all the world, and its parts, and its produce, and for priests and rulers, and for the high priest (or celebrant?) and the king, and the peace of the whole Church. And then let the chief priest, praying for the people, bless it, as Moses commanded in these words, 'The Lord bless thee and keep thee; the Lord make His Face to shine upon thee, and give thee peace' (Numbers vi. 24-36). Then let also the bishop pray for them, and say, 'Save Thy people, O Lord, and bless Thine inheritance, which Thou hast saved with Thy precious Blood of Thine Anointed, and hast called a royal priesthood and pure nation.' And after this let the offering be made: all the people standing up and praying in silence. And when it shall have been offered, let each order by itself partake of the Lord's Body and the precious Blood, with modesty and caution, as men drawing near to the body of a king. And let the women approach having their heads veiled, as is fit for the order of women. And let the doors be kept, that no unbeliever or person not properly instructed (*amyetus, uninitiate*) enter in."

Many of us may think that we have already seen an order of service not very unlike this; and considering the lapse of about fifteen eventful centuries, and the changes for good and evil of all races of men in them, it may be thought that our own liturgy does much to perpetuate this most ancient and congregational order of public worship. Deacons seem to have retained their ministerial position from the first ages, and to have acted as churchwardens, or indeed as the deacons of a modern Independent congregation. The latter portion, however, is one chiefly of social importance, as the property and buildings of the congregation vest in them, and there is no counterbalancing independence possessed by the minister. Nevertheless, the organisation of these congregations, held together in antagonism to the prevailing national or imperial system, may so far resemble the discipline of a primitive congregation of Roman, Greek, or Syrian brethren, bound in mutual regard by pressure from without. Moreover, the Church had then authority, if not power, in many of the affairs of life; and the deacons, acting in the temporal as

well as spiritual character, might sometimes, if not always, enforce obedience.

Such a fourth-century congregation as has just been described must have been very different from that which we imagined as assembled in the house of Pudens. It would be more numerous, more definitely instructed ; more firmly defined in position and circumscribed by doctrine ; more carefully anxious for orthodoxy of thought ; free at last from personal danger because of the faith, fearing no longer the call to violent death for Christ ; but already deeply troubled about error concerning Him, and stained with sin against Him. Many in Egypt and the East, and by this time even in the West, had fallen away from the congregation in error, or been cut off and expelled, to the distress of their brethren. Many more had left the Churches of their homes, and gone away into the desert renouncing home and kindred, and common sacraments and prayers, and the walk with friends in the House of God. A changed and different generation would now fill the Church of the martyred Pudentiana, built where she herself had lived, and loved, and knelt with her kindred to the last. The pride and power of Rome were fast going, and the trebly hundred triumphs nearly all told. The Christian brotherhood must have felt weak no longer, for they were now the only element of power and stability in the Empire. The seed of the Church had been well sown, and ages of luxuriant growth were to follow, both of wheat and tares. Those who worshipped Christ in the fourth century saw their triumph over the power of the heathen who had slain their brethren with the sword. But they must have felt that they also were condemned to hard trial with other enemies, scarcely easier to meet or fly from. The sheep had found green pasture, but were in danger of losing sight of their Shepherd.

CHAPTER VI.

THE CROSS AND DOME.

IT was mentioned that the word Basilica was used in the same sense as Dominica, for any kind of church, before and after the time of Charles the Great. And we also arranged all ancient churches by a pithy and convenient classification, as Basilicas aboveground, and catacomb or cemetery chapels below. There is no particular objection to this principle; but a few further explanations, if not exceptions, seem necessary. Arranging examples is said in Oxford to be nearly as bad as driving pigs, "especially," as a professor of the latter art feelingly observed, "when there's many of 'em;" and D'Agincourt and Lord Lindsay supply us with a quite inconvenient number of excellent plans and descriptions, which ought to be noticed here, and assigned either to the aboveground or underground category. But what is to be done or said, when one of the first instances we meet with, S. Martin ad Montes¹ at Rome, is of three churches excavated or built one over the other?

Again, it certainly is awkward for our first classification, that, as the level of the ground alters, and even by their original building some churches (as the lower hall in the house of Pudens) look out into hollow areas, and are half underground, half above it. Then there are many excavated churches, chapels, or oratories, which are quite unlike the regular cubiculum of the catacombs. These, as has been said, have for the most part become the crypts or confessiones

¹ D'Agincourt, *Arch.* pl. xiv.

of larger churches built above them. Only here it must be repeated that in thinking of an underground church, whether it possesses any mural ornament or not, we think of a church whose natural and right colour-ornamentation is mural mosaic. Where all light is artificial and from within, the proper decoration must certainly be by the flashing reflections and varying hues of glass and golden inlayings, for the most part : in such churches they rank even before fresco, from their brilliancy, as of a minutely broken mirror. And we may perhaps consider that all our massive Early English and Norman styles, with round arches, and strength far beyond architectural necessities, seem to symbolise, or possess the solidity of a cavern hewn in the rocky foundations of the earth, and therefore that their colour-ornament is best bestowed on their walls, rather than on their windows. That is to say, both may be ornamented, but one or the other must take the lead.¹ Walls and windows cannot both go first as vehicles of colour; and, of course, in all sepulchral or quasi-sepulchral architecture, even in the Venetian and Ravennese Byzantine, the windows are very small compared with the extent of the walls, so that the large spaces of opaque wall-colour will predominate over the small ones of transparent window-colour.

Again, in Southern churches it is an object to exclude light and heat, and in the cold North they always want to shut out storm and tempest. So that the Byzantine and the

¹ (From Smith's *Dict. of Christ. Antiq.*, Glass, p. 729.) Glass windows have been found in Pompeii, and even in our own country among Roman remains. There is a passage in Prudentius, speaking of the Basilica of S. Paul, built by Constantine, to the following effect :—

“Tum camuros hyalo insigni varie cucurrit arcus
Sic prata vernis floribus reident.”—*Peristeph.* xii. 53, 54.

“He surrounded the bending arches in many colours (varie) with brilliant glass : it shone like a meadow decked with spring flowers.”

If this translation be correct (and I am personally unable to construe the Latin, unless *cucurrit* is to be made transitive, as the Roman editor of Prudentius (ed. 1788) says it is), it proves the existence of stained glass in the fourth century. It is substantially that of Emeric David, and Labarte, and seems much preferable to that which makes “hyalo” mean *mosaics* (Labarte, *Handbook of Arts of Middle Ages*, c. ii. p. 66, Eng. trans.).

It seems agreed that there was no *figured* glass till the eleventh century.

Northman had plenty of objects and tastes in common, and both built with solid round arches, sturdy pillars, and massive walls, regardless of constructive ingenuity, and heedful of that quiet dimness and seclusion which is, as it were, the ideal of bodily comfort in church to many weary worshippers. It is almost a fantastic comparison; but, after all, comparisons between South and North are always contrasts; and those who have not been scolded out of the use of their imaginations by modern matter-of-fact—which ignores so many facts—may find it worth while to think on the likenesses and the differences between services in limestone crypts of Asia and pinewood chapels of Norway; and, in fact, between the devotions, the lives, and deaths of Northern and of Southern Christians. We know too little of the former; and our thoughts of saintly life may perhaps be formed too much on Italian models. The whole force of art and poetry impresses the ideal of Fra Angelico on our minds; and we cannot think of S. Boniface or S. Olaf as at all resembling it.¹ Compare the latter, for example, with S. Polycarp. Both saints are confessedly historical characters—as much so as modern soldiers or *savants*. One had to deal with, and to die by the hands of, Roman lictors and stationaries. The other was mangled with axe and dagger by the fierce Bonders of Throndhjem, who were more sincerely zealous for Thor and Odin than Romans for Jove or Athene. But it is probable that the worldly result of both lives will be felt as long as that of a modern career of scientific study. It is allowable to compare them; for had the life and death of the Smyrnæan bishop been other than it was, the Faith might have sustained incalculable loss in Asia at the time of its sharpest trial: it could not, in fact, have endured without victory, or won victory without such leading. The King of Norway was, beyond all question, by his life, and the remorse felt for his death, a chief means of establishing Christianity in the North of Europe; and therefore an unspeakable relief to the Church in the South, by checking the wasting fury and blind ravages of Varangir and Vikingir. Either saint

¹ Mr. Green's *History of the English People* does valuable service to Northern readers, in reminding them of a hagiology of their own race.

unquestionably believed and preached the Christian Faith in his own way, one by the Word, the other with force meeting force; both met death fairly as he came to them in their harvest-field. The Greek had had open vision, and the knowledge of an Apostle; he had but to preach in fulness of the Spirit, and to endure to the end. The Northman smote with the sword, and perished by the sword. Devout men carried both, or what was left of them, to their rest with lamentation; and by what we know, the repentance and sorrow of enemies, as well as of friends, followed the mangled body of the thrice slain king,¹ and the word of God prevailed through his death in his measure, as through more peaceful martyrs.

One may remember that the Eastern confessors were men after all, and that the Northern soldiers were Christians after all. But how many men of both races alike may have felt the gloomy quiet of their low-browed arches, which shut out the unresting strife of the world, from Alexandria to Constantinople, or from Rouen and Aachen to Thronthjem and Iona.

"No rude sound shall reach thine ear,
Armour's clang, nor war-steed champing;
Trump nor pibroch summon here
Mustering clan, nor squadron tramping."

In any case, there is a class of impressions or emotions which Byzantine and Northern interiors seem about equally calculated to inspire. Some call them feelings of gloom others of repose; some say they are dismal and sepulchral, others that they are restful even to absolute content. There is no particular harm either way, but I sympathise a good deal more with the latter cast of mind.

Further, besides our examples of crypt under chapel, and perhaps that chapel under a Basilica, there are the various examples of converted temples of heathen worship. And when some account has been given of these, we shall arrive at the essentially Christian use of the fourfold Basilica as a symbol of the Cross, of the death of the body, and of the Church as the universal body of Christ. With this, and in

¹ See Carlyle's last work.

contrast to it, the central dome is employed as an emblem of His kingdom in Heaven, and of the final victory and state of the Church triumphant.

For our examples, their descriptions are to be found in Lord Lindsay, who refers in most cases to D'Agincourt's plans and drawings; and most of them are described or referred to in Freeman's or Fergusson's *Architecture*, the latter a well-illustrated book; and one or more of these books must be within every student's reach. Let the reader recall, or refer to Smith's *Dictionary* for, our two types: the regularly built Basilica, aisles, columns, and apse, and the excavated cubiculum, an oblong chamber with low-browed arches, and a table tomb and arcosolium, or round half-vault, at the end.¹

First, for converted temples adapted to Christian service. It is probable that S. Agnes, without the walls of Rome, was built by Constantine at the instance and under the guidance of S. Sylvester, the then Bishop of Rome. But the round church of S. Constantia, at no great distance, is supposed to be, or rather to contain, large remains of an ancient temple of Bacchus. So at least its ancient vintage-mosaics, and the magnificent porphyry sarcophagus² with vine-ornament, which it once contained, might lead us to believe; though there are great doubts as to the structure, since the columns are not only of different proportions and sizes, as if collected

¹ The most ancient Christian Basilicas are supposed to be the Basilica of Reparatus, near Orléansville, Algiers, which is in the true "dromical" or oblong form, possibly of the third century; those of S. Simeon Stylites, also African, and probably the almost square cathedral of Trier. These are quite enough to show that Constantine built S. Peter's and S. Sophia in the Basilica form, because he found it already the adopted and accustomed plan of large Christian churches. The change to the fourfold or cruciform Basilica, with its great symbolisms, extends from Constantine to Justinian, and is signalled by the second church of S. Sophia, now standing.

I do not think my readers want a catalogue of all known churches of the most ancient date, so much as a few examples in each age, with references to authoritative books which have good plans and pictures in them. Nobody can tell how delightful it is in travelling to enter a historical building when one knows its history, and to look at its construction and ornament when one is prepared to understand them; and this book will be of real use to travellers if it can teach them to read up a few ancient and accessible churches before they start.

² Now in the Vatican Museum. See Parker's Photographs, No. 210, and Aringhi, *Roma Sotterranea*, vol. i. p. 156.

from other buildings, but are coupled together on the radius of the circular church, and not parallel with its circumference,¹ as would have been the case at any very early date. At all events, it has the characteristics above pointed out—the circular peristyle first walled in and made a cloister, then roofed with a domical vault and clerestory windows above.

But the Church of S. Stefano Rotondo, on the Coelian Hill, in Rome, is the best example of a round peristyle with its central shrine, converted to Christian uses. It seems uncertain if it were originally a temple, a bath, or a market-building. The third idea of it seems the most probable. D'Agincourt gives two most interesting plans, one of the church in its present state, another from a very ancient ground-sketch, showing its original condition very clearly. It must have been built between A.D. 467 and 483, and is of great size, not less than 210 feet diameter. If the reader will imagine a circular interior, with two magnificent central columns close together, supporting round arches and a central cupola : twenty-one lower, but still fine ones, forming a rotunda around them, and not arched, but with horizontal entablature : and forty-four others connected by a lower wall, and forming a grand circular aisle, with raftered and tiled roof, and double clerestory windows over : the whole covered by a very obtusely conical roof : he will easily understand D'Agincourt's view of the place. The central cellar was probably a small temple dedicated to some god of markets or of country produce, Faunus or Sylvanus, Liber or Alma Ceres, perhaps with an emperor annexed. The name of Claudius is connected with this building, and a coin of Nero is in existence which bears a similar temple on its reverse. The ancient plan, seen or possessed by D'Agincourt, shows how the space beyond the present wall and columns was roofed in four-eighths, leaving alternate equal spaces open, which would answer the needs of a market, and probably witnessed scenes of Roman domestic and country life, which, like most of the happier scenes of life, are all unnoticed by history.²

¹ D'Agincourt, vol. i. p. 16.

² Plan in Smith's *Dictionary of Christian Antiquities*, S. V. Church.

S. Peter ad Vincula, at Rome, is a remarkable example of a church constructed with the help of columns procured from far more ancient buildings. Its marble columns of the Roman Doric, taller and more slender than the powerful ideal of the Athenian order, may have ornamented the Thermæ of Trajan or of Titus. Where they came from originally is still uncertain, as temples and fora were always changing, and one consul's or emperor's architectural plunder was often torn away from his buildings by his successors. As Rome had done to other cities, so she did to herself, long before the age of barbarian desolation.

There are some excellent observations in Dr. Freeman's sketches as to the difficulty of employing the vast columns used in heathen porticoes or hypæthral temples of one story, in Christian Basilicas where long, inner ranges of columns, of moderate height, were employed. You could not get great monoliths which had only an entablature to bear, and with that reached the full height of a temple-wall, inside any Basilica except those on the vastest scale, as the Lateran, or the great Liberian Basilica, best known as Sta. Maria Maggiore. The consequence is (see p. 209, *Historical Sketches*) that in S. Mary, in Cosmedin, five "stately columns of the original temple are built up in the western and northern walls"; and the curious sight follows, of churches built on the sites of ancient temples and out of the spoils of ancient temples, but where the columns of the temples on whose site they stand remain unused and embedded in the wall. All visitors to Rome, and every one in fact who has seen a good large photograph of the Forum, must have noticed how utterly the church of S. Lorenzo in Miranda,¹ is dwarfed by the half buried columns of the Temple of Antoninus and Faustina, and how the towering pillars, in the centre, seem as if they went on in continual exhortation on one monotonous text, "There were giants in those days."

The fact is that the great columns of Greece, as far as the constructive or scientific part of Gothic architecture went, were pretty much what giants would be now in an army, not

¹ Parker, *Forum Romanum*, p. 65, plate 32.

of any particular use. The Lombard or German range of arcaded pillars gathered to their work in military order like the ranks of a cohort, and between them always bore up weights which the grand monoliths were never troubled with. It was enough for the latter to stand in splendour ; and their magnificence is hardly lessened sometimes, when they lie overthrown ; at least their power of pensive impression then seems greater to me than their imposing force when erect. I remember the ruins of Baalbek, on Anti-Lebanon, as well as most men ; and I think the overthrown shafts which one paces again and again—whose diameter as they lie screens horse, and man, and tent—give one a greater idea of size and power than their brethren who have yet to fall ; so it struck me on the spot. But they belong to an architecture of magnificence and display, as the Doric columns of the Parthenon to a time of rejoicing sacrifice, which looked on its temple rather as an eternal pageant of glory and beauty to the goddess of Athens than as a building to answer any human purpose, or exemplify any mechanical conditions. As Mr. Fergusson observes, the idea of stability is of vast importance, because it gives a building a monumental character, and carries the mind backward and forward through the ages of its duration. Much of the beauty of the Parthenon is subtly connected with this. The pillars of the portico, considering their relative height, may be said to be twice as massive as those of the Pantheon ; and they have nothing to do except support their pediment ; but they ought to do that to all time. A range of columns in a Basilica has a massive wall to bear, and then a clerestory, with its share of the weight and thrust of a roof. But with the thought of the heavy work they have to do, the element of science, and calculated strength, and the best constructive proportion comes in, and divides our attention with ideas of power and stability. It is so in our own buildings. Norman builders may have made their pillars so short and massive, in the first instance, because they knew no better in the engineering sense. But when the rude Norman nave is *there*, it conveys an idea of men who built for many ages, and who at length desired, having destroyed much, to leave some work of their own behind which might avail for others.

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It may be fanciful, but there seems to be a relation between the Norman and Early English and its Gothic development, parallel with that between the underground catacomb and the open-air Basilica. The low, round arches, as I said, are like caves of the earth in either case, and are still associated with the idea of refuge. The persecuted confessor of the third century fled to his sunless crypts among the dead witnesses, to whose company he might soon be added; the harried monk might hope his solid masonry would keep out Hun here or Viking there; the repentant or outworn warrior might find a safe cloister for instruction and rest before the grave—so one feels under many Northern and Southern vaultings. The Southern Basilica is full of power and splendour, and the later Gothic is all life and growth, and fresh study of nature, and tells not only of the free air, but of forest glades; of “oak, and ash, and thorn,” that pardonable woodland adjuration. The architectural transition to it from the Norman, as well as the earlier, is from endurance into rejoicing, and from suppression to development. The text is the same; but the human imagination is let loose, and at work on it for good or evil.

Two more churches we must notice before going into the great Byzantine modification, of quadruple nave and central dome. The Basilica itself seems early to have been taken as typifying the cross, at the intersection of its transept, or chalcidice, with the nave, the apse or head-piece extending above it. But one of the first and most remarkable instances of transformation from heathen to Christian uses was the temple of Venus at Aphrodisias in Caria. In this case the whole original peristyle seems to have been inclosed by a wall; the cella was demolished, the columns of the posticum, or rear-front, were removed and placed in a line with the lateral columns; and finally, a clerestory wall and windows were placed on the whole lateral colonnade. And so they made the house of Aphrodite into a church about 200 feet long by 100 feet wide; and Messrs. Texier and Pullan (*Byzantine Architecture*, p. 89) think it was done between the time of Constantine and that of Theodosius. It is interesting, as we have been considering the Roman Basilica as a step of transition between Greek temples and Christian

churches, to note all instances in which the Church laid hands on the temples themselves ; but generally speaking, as Dr. Freeman says, the process was to destroy the temples, and consecrate the secular Basilicas. But the converted church which should have stood first in point of antiquity is the church of Rome, dedicated to S. Urban and called the Caffarella, from the hill on which it stands. It is literally a pagan temple re-arranged, and resembles (except for the indomitable strength of its brick walls) that ideal of a proprietary chapel which began to prevail, I suppose, about 1820 in London and elsewhere, and which survives in the columned porches and pediments of so many well-intentioned but afflicting edifices. It is entirely of brickwork, excepting the four Corinthian columns of fine marble which support the portico and their architrave. There are remains—or there were in D'Agincourt's time—of another brick wall which inclosed the small temple or cella, instead of the Greek peristyle ; and if that wall was of the same date as the original building, it would prove that the climate or city-life of Rome made an outer wall necessary, both for comfort within and secure possession of one's ground-space without. The Caffarella is outside Juvenal's Capene Gate¹ southwards, and near the Circus of Caracalla, and the traditional Fountain of Egeria. It may have been a temple of Bacchus ; as an altar, wreathed by a rather grandly cut serpent in a naturalistic style, and bearing a dedicatory inscription to the god from his priest Apronius, remains under the portico. Its remaining bas-reliefs of trophies of arms and armour may have been those of a temple of victory. Anyhow, it is a small lofty chapel, about forty feet by thirty inside, and an excellent ideal for, let us say, a Positivist cathedral of the future, on the oecumenical scale.

But we have now come to the first achievement of Christian architecture, which for once and for ever impressed the cross on the builder's imagination.² "It must be confessed," says

¹ Sat. III. Ad veteres Arcus ; madidâque Capenâ.

² For these passages see *Christian Art*, pp. 9 and 62. Letters 1 and 2, vol. i. For plans of S. Sophia, see Fergusson's *History of Architecture*, and S. D'Agincourt's *Architecture*.

Lord Lindsay, "that Rome left the grander flight, the glory of creating a new and peculiarly original Christian architecture, to Byzantium. It sprang at once to perfection at the command of Constantine. His churches dedicated to the Apostles, and to the Divine Wisdom (S. Sophia), displayed its distinctive form of features precisely as they appear in the latest productions of Byzantine architects. Instead of the lengthened nave and transverse presbytery of the Roman Basilica, with all its minute though interesting details, four naves or pillared avenues" (I have used the word "Basilicas" hitherto, according to our original definition) "of equal length and breadth, were disposed at right angles to each other, so as to form the figure of a cross; while in the centre, beyond the points where each nave terminated, a dome or cupola, springing from four arches resting ultimately on enormous piers, soared upwards; expanding as it were into infinity like the vault of heaven. Such, indeed, was its symbolic meaning, taken in connection with the cross, the emblem of the obedience whereby that heaven was purchased for sinners."

This most important passage leads us to several considerations worth pursuing. In the first place as to the idea of the cross; then as to those connected with the cupola. How did the architects come by them? Was the great cruciform ideal conceived inside a Basilica, or outside? There are, I think, two chief answers or lines of answer.

We may judge how the thought of the cross or transverse symbol had penetrated and dominated the Christian mind, before Constantine and the peace of the Church, by its universal display as a symbol, as soon as it could be borne and proclaimed in safety. One or two "classic" or well-known passages on this may be added here,¹ as to the mental or external use of the thought and the sign of the cross; and

¹ Tertullian, *De Cor. Mil.* c. iii. "Ad omnem progressum et promotum," &c.—"Wherever we go, or whatever we begin; entering or departing; in putting on of shoes; at the bath, at table, at candle-lighting, in going to rest or sitting down;—whatever conjuncture of life employs us, we mark the sign of the cross on our forehead." So also S. Chrysostom of the universal representation of the cross in his day. *παρὰ ἀρχουσιν, παρὰ ἀρχομένοις, παρὰ γυναιξί, παρὰ ἑνδρασι, ἐν ὕπνοις κ. ἐν παστέσσιν, ἐν σκεύεσιν ἀργυροῖς, ἐν τοίχων γραφαῖς.*

there is an article on the cross in Smith's *Dictionary of Christian Antiquities*, which goes into the subject more at length. It is certain that the first Christian cross-sign was that now called the Cross of S. Andrew, the decussated cross, or Greek Chi, X, the initial of the name or title Christ. The Greek P or Rho, R, was soon after added, and joined thus $\text{X}\rho$ with the X, it forms the monogram or chrism, which, when placed above the vexillum, or cross-hung banner of the legions, formed the great Labarum of the Empire. The cavalry standards of Rome were in fact already cruciform, as S. Jerome says of the yard-arm and the mast; further, these vexilla generally bore a dragon, and the standard-bearer was called Draconarius. Henceforth the Draconarius had to bear the sign of Christ above the dragon, and the labarum had its promise that the Lord would tread down the young lion with him, under His soldiers' feet. The monogram, then, was used in various forms, but quite universally through Christendom, till (I think) S. Bernardino of Siena introduced or popularised the later initial-symbol IHS. But in, and from, Constantine's days, the Christian world began to dwell with special contemplation on the manner of our Lord's death; and it was natural to set forth the reproach of the cross as the glory of His followers; so that the upright or penal cross was often substituted for the decussated, and often had the loop of the P added to its upper limb thus, $\text{P}\rho$. The architect, then, like every other Christian, would have his imagination, or inner eyesight, strongly impressed with the cross. Now Roman architects, whatever they may have been as artists in Constantine's day, were unsurpassed engineers and builders; and it seems as likely as not that the idea of a great dome like the Pantheon, with four naves to back up the piers against its mighty thrust, may have occurred to several of them at once. The circle resting on the square formed by their angles would be a form of colossal strength. I well remember this remark as made to me by one of our greatest engineers in 1859, under the dome of S. Sophia in the triforium. "Ah—circle on a square—*they* knew how to build." I think, in fact, that the constructive value of the cross-form

may have occurred to some architect whose mind was already full of the symbol, like other Christian men's: and that he worked it accordingly; and probably as he worked and felt his success, the symbolism expanded in beauty and glory with the building, and extended and varied its applications in all men's minds.

Again the cruciform idea must have occurred to everybody, scientific architects or not, on the *inside* of any Basilica during service. For at such times, as they are described in the Apostolic Constitutions (see p. 204), the Churches must have been filled with ranges of seats, which must have at once defined the cross form most decidedly by their central gangways and by the transept passage for crossing the church between nave and choir, or choir and sanctuary. Everybody will see this in a moment in any English church. In simpler cruciform plans, like that of the beautiful chapel of Placidia at Ravenna, we shall see, still more easily, that the idea of the memorial chapel, derived from the catacombs, may have had its share in the cruciform transition. As yet, we are thinking of this change as the great Eastern or Byzantine effort of Christian art, proclaiming as it did a new power of architectural invention, and giving promise to the fast decaying empire that something of her science and achievement should be preserved through wreck, in Christian hands. I have no objection to the term Renaissance; but the *thing* began with the Byzantine art, which the Renaissance so much despises; at least, which a large class of scholars and dunces, poets and poetasters, painters and dilettantes, all conscientiously think they have a right to despise. Art began to draw new life from Christianity in the Eastern metropolis of the Christian Church, with the great constructive ideas which it pleased the Divine Wisdom to grant the first Christian emperor, and the still mighty men he gathered round him. The Renaissance is really Christian, and began with Constantine, when the Faith began its official work for the world.

Whether its mental rudiment came from the inside or outside of the church, there can be no doubt of the interior impression of the dome-and-cross plan. Once built, the

sweeping horizon and gradually soaring effect must have told on worshippers and spectators alike ; and the four perspectives of the naves in almost an equal degree. Perhaps there may not be much interest in analysing the idea of height, or considering why places look very lofty, and why they sometimes do not produce the effect they really ought. I believe, if they are to receive a great impression of height, one's conceptions must be added either by guiding lines on which one soars, or by standards of size, with which one compares.¹ Professor Ruskin told us, twenty years ago, that the only way to approach the notion of the size of a Swiss mountain is to count the blue fringe of pines on some upward slope, follow them down to those on the nearer foreground beneath, consider their multitude and apparent smallness, and then, standing under the nearest, to consider that each of the most distant is a great forest tree also. That is calculating height by a standard, and it certainly assists the eye and the mind very much. Then for leading lines. Every landscape painter knows—especially all students of Turner know—that to give the notion of height in a mountain, the curves of its drawing must be kept gentle and gradual ; and that to exaggerate its steepness really dwarfs it. The artful, or rather natural, use of easy slopes and soft curves leads the eye upwards, so that the mind feels and pursues the long ascent, instead of “shutting up,” as the body would have to do, at the foot of an impossible perpendicular. Exaggeration is bathos everywhere, particularly in mountain steepness. It must be some parallel cause which gives the dome that upward sweep in our vision which perpendicular lines never attain. One seldom looks directly upwards ; and when one does, the perpendicular falls into perspective, and height vanishes at a vanishing point.

It does not seem that the idea of the cupola was taken direct from the circular temple, so much as from the great vaultings of Roman baths. They must have been the work-

¹ See also the remarks on the Spanish Chapel, Sta. M. Novella, Mornings in Florence, No. IV., as compared with the Duomo. Excellent observations also in Freeman's Sketches ; as to proper spring of arches from columns, and perspective grandeur as preferable to the gigantic.

ing examples, and the Pantheon, whatever it was originally meant to be, is their central type. The architectural transition, from Greek through old Roman and new Roman to Gothic, is through the round arch to the pointed arch, or, as builders say, from horizontal to vertical principles. There seems no doubt about this part of the progress of one style into the other. The adoption of the dome led to the vertical style because it made the eye mount spirally upwards, instead of running along friezes and columns into horizontal perspectives. Steepness of angle in itself gives no greater impression of height or sublimity than is produced by the actual overhanging terror of a sheer-down wall or precipice. That is great, but its effect depends on terror: the mind does not rise with it, you are rather crushed by it, and get from under it, or from its brink or coping. But as far as line can raise the eye and the feelings, it does so by the soaring effect of great spirals. This term soaring is used so often about the dome because it is simply and accurately descriptive of its effect.¹ Anybody who happens ever to have watched the flight of some large and powerful birds of the hawk or eagle kind may best understand the effect produced by the spirals of their ascent, "sailing with supreme dominion through the azure fields of air." The great white Norway falcon obtains its name of gyre-falcon from its vast circular sweeps in rising above its prey. Now this is exactly the effect produced on the eye by the interior of a great dome, rising in perspective line beyond line and ring beyond ring. It will be seen how the horizontal parallelism of circles so far above the eye at different heights passes into vertical sweeps of ascent. One sees all the inner rings of a dome in perspective as a great spiral. And it is thus that the Byzantine style, preserving its strongly marked cornices and even horizontal lines of entablature (which it sometimes bends up into arches), nevertheless prepares the way for the uprushing Gothic, which Northern "woodmen of the woods" brought from their pine and beech forests. For the Gothic temple, like a greater building, was "found in the wood"; and though it contain the lessons of Greece and Rome, has nevertheless its own indelible character,

¹ See p. 85, *supra*.

which cannot be traced to their marble masses. New pupils came to ancient Greece, with Theodoric and Alboin, and in after days with Pisano, to receive the teaching which it has pleased God to put into her records for ever. But their life was their own, and their great docility was matched by their untamed originality. When the Lombards learnt the Christian Faith, it soon did in great degree turn their lust and ferocity into that knightly valour and tenderness of which the story of Gundobald shows they were capable. In one generation the horrid chronicle of Alboin and Rosamond becomes the sweet love-tale of Agilulf and Theodolinda. The Long-beards learnt much, but they could never sink into the exhausted quiet of Byzantine workmen, any more than they could learn the contented art-perfection of ancient Athens. The repose of the Pheidian work, in knowledge, humanly speaking, that all is done that man can do, is right and grand, and nobly typified in the *Theseus*. But it is the grandeur and the repose of men not yet taught to seek a divine ideal. The mighty unrest, which is the greatness and the frailty of the Gothic spirit, distinguishes the Northern workmen for ever from those who felt no painful contrast of the world and the Spirit, who sought no spiritual city, and thought not of walls of righteousness or gates of praise. The Gothic vital principle is aspiration from avowedly low levels; by the confession of imperfections and the acknowledged desire of change, and that even in oneself, even to the heart. "It is that strange disquietude of the Gothic spirit which is its greatness: that restlessness of the dreaming mind, that wanders hither and thither among the niches, and flickers feverishly around the pinnacles, and frets and fades in labyrinthine knots and shadows along wall and roof; and yet is not satisfied, nor shall be satisfied. The Greek could stay in his triglyph furrow, and be at peace; but the work of the Gothic art is fretwork still, and it can neither rest *in* nor *from* its labour, but must pass on, sleeplessly, until its love of change shall be pacified for ever in the change that shall come alike on them that rest and them that sleep."

Byzantine work rests indeed now, for it is sunk into conventional treatment and passive repetition of ancestral type in

all the three arts alike. But for the one great work which truly may be called Gothic, because it was done by Ostrogothic mandate, it can best be described here, and my own memory cannot let it pass ; it is unlike all other buildings on this earth, and Lord Lindsay's account of it is better than most descriptions I have met with, in the course of about forty-five years' reading :—

“The sepulchre of Theodoric the Goth was raised to his memory at Ravenna by his daughter Amalasuntha. I know few monuments so interesting, and it is highly picturesque externally, an attraction which that of Placidia wants. The body of the structure is round, and elevated high in the air on a decagonal basement, supported by circular arches, now filled nearly to the soffit with water ; the interior is lighted by small loop-holes only ; the sarcophagus is gone ; the roof is of one solid stone, or rather rock, hollowed into the shape of a cupola, and dropped as if from heaven ; three feet thick, more than thirty in diameter, and weighing two hundred tons, the broad rings or loops by which it was lowered jutting out externally, like ragged battlements, having never been chiselled away. The whole building, though not large, has a rugged, craggy, eternal character about it ; weeds tuft themselves among the masonry, and the breeze dallies with them, as on the mountain side ; and the scene is nearly as lonely. This monument, though unquestionably of Roman masonry, is the sole relic of what alone can pretend to the title of Gothic architecture. And most eminently characteristic it is of the indomitable races of the North ; one would think men feared that neither Alaric nor Theodoric could be held down in their graves, except by a river rolling over one, and a mountain oppressing the other.”

* Those who buried Alaric in the bed of the Busentinus may indeed have felt some such fear ; but he was a far wilder and less reclaimed Goth than Theodoric, and more than a century intervenes between them.¹ Nevertheless, the fear lest some “grim king should rouse again” seems to have been felt very widely. Antar, the Arab, was covered by a mighty cairn of stones, “lest he should break

¹ Theodoric died 526 ; Alaric the year after the sack of Rome, in 410.

through"; and this was certainly the object of the Celtic and Northern barrows. "Can the Pyramids," says Lord Lindsay, "and the mighty mounds of Asia Minor, originate thus, in fear of Vampirism?"

Our next must be a chapter of transitions, Northern and Southern, external and internal, from the great entablature to Romanesque arcades; from low-pitched roofs to high, and consequently from round to pointed; from masonry in the hands of masons, to masonry in the hands of woodmen and smiths; from East Roman or West Roman, to Lombard or Ultramontane.

CHAPTER VII.

TRANSITIONS.

WE have seen the rudiment of the cruciform church in the chalcidice or transept of the original Basilica, with its central apse beyond ; and have noticed how the cruciform idea, once started, was gloriously realised, by the constructive conceptions of architects employed by Constantine himself, into the fourfold nave, which has been roughly, not quite incorrectly, called the fourfold Basilica, and its central dome. It will be seen, and may bear repetition, that, as Lord Lindsay points out, the cross-form is really the invention of the Eastern or Byzantine Church, though not in what we call an advanced Byzantine age. The decay of constructive art had not set in, and the Romans were nearly as good engineers as ever ; but they, or their Greek carvers, were at this time losing all sculpturesque power, and the decorative part of architecture was consequently getting quite barbarous. This great modification and improvement in church-building was made with the last strength of Imperial Rome and the first strength of the Christian Empire.¹ It is the first achievement of the

¹ The Church of the Holy Apostles at Constantinople is stated to have been the first example of a church built in form of a Cross, with dome over intersecting transept.—Texier and Pullan, *Byzantine Architecture*, p. 12. Eusebius thus speaks of it—"The Emperor erected a church in Constantinople to the memory of the Twelve Apostles. The walls were covered with marble from pavement to roof ; the nave was ceiled ; and the dome, as well as the roof, was covered with plates of brass. Constantine caused his tomb to be erected in the centre of the church (under the dome), in the midst of twelve other monuments, which he had erected in the form of columns, in honour of the Apostles." This is specially interesting, and we must return to it—for it not

Christian renaissance of art ; but it is destined to wait long indeed for a second like it. Art was to be overloaded, barbarized and re-barbarized by Lower Empire and Teuton conquerors ; to be wasted by the tribes of the Desert, yet followed as their model ; to be adopted in love and reverence by 'War-man' and Norman, but to change altogether in their hands, so as to retain, at first view, scarcely anything of its first appearance ; preserving, nevertheless, in full architectural effect, the perspectives of Greece, the arcades of Rome, and the ground-plan of the imperishable Cross.

The Memorial Church in which the remains of Galla Placidia rested till the last century is one of the most interesting and beautiful examples which ever existed of the adoption of the Cross form, for a sepulchral building in which the catacomb type is still retained. But before we can get to it, it seems best to understand the process, or first step of Gothic progress, by which the round arch took the place of the entablature in the architecture of Roman interiors. The great salient example of transition is the Palace of Diocletian at Spalato, or Salonæ Palatium. Some of the most striking examples of conservatism in preserving the level entablature are Justinian's Church at Bethlehem, and the Lateran and Liberian¹ Basilicas at Rome. As it is best always to go back to beginnings and trace Gothic home to Greek where we can, a page or two as to the origin of this transition may suit our purpose.

For this we must go back, at the risk of some little repetition from chap. i. bk. 2, to the Roman composite arcades ; where Greek and Roman or Greek and Etruscan were combined by the architects of the early Empire. "The true Roman composite order," says Mr. Fergusson, "was not any of the columnar ordinances, Doric, Ionic, or Corinthian, but an arrangement of two pillars, placed at a distance from one

only points out that the dome and radiating naves were, technically speaking, a combination of the round temple-basilica and the dromical business-basilica, but that this tomb must have been a precedent for Charles the Great's sepulchre under the dome at Aachen. Viewing round churches as derived from memorial temples of the same form, the centre of each would, of course, be its chief place.

¹ Called Santa Maria Maggiore.

another nearly equal to their own height, and having a very long entablature, which in consequence required to be supported in the centre by an arch springing from piers." This was in fact merely a screen of Greek architecture, columns and horizontal architrave, stuck in front of Etrurian round arches. It was very useful, looked rich and powerful, and made architects begin to calculate the strength of their supports for the masses they meant to rest on arcades. But it pointed to a diminution of the spirit of redundant strength, of sacrifice to the idea of endless permanence, and such feeling as has been described as conveyed by the Parthenon ; and the columns, instead of doing their work easily and as if they meant to do it for ever, rather pretended to do work they did not do. Then they had to be as tall as the top of the arches and piers behind, which did the real work, or the entablature would have cut across in front of the said arches ; so the pillars had to be set on pedestals ; which was quite un-Hellenic, and made them too evidently ornamental, quite putting columns in the place of statues, and anticipating the modern madness of decorating architecture with imitations of other architecture. A better step was to have projecting keystones in the arches. But the Romans never could harmonize what was in fact two constructions into a construction and its ornamentation ; and it was quite clear the discordance between the decorative entablature in front and the constructive or working arches behind would have to be got rid of. Which was to go ? The piers held up the arches, the columns held up the entablature ; there were these four parts. Could not the columns be put in the place of the piers, if the entablature were got rid of, or accommodated to the arches ? Then there would not be all the weight on the long cornice between each pair of pillars. So, after many trials and expedients, they took the pillars down from their pedestals, increased their relative strength, and put them under the arches instead of piers ; making the arches spring direct from their capitals. The entablature was reduced, and ran along the top of the wall above the arches like a projecting cornice. So it is in Diocletian's palace-hall at Spalato ; and there, too, at one end of the building, the entablature is

itself bent into the form of an arch, and springs from one great column to another over the door of the hall.

This construction ought to be understood and traced to its origin ; because we see it every day in church and secular building alike ; and because of the many noble and beautiful examples of all its technical variations, at all dates and to suit all needs. It will be scarcely too much to ask my readers to think of a series of round arches on piers, inclosed by square lintels resting on pillars in front, in any order they like, Greek or Roman, Ionic, Doric, Corinthian, Composite, or Baroque ; and they will all be able to see in their mind's eye the advantage of getting rid either of the arch piers or the lintel columns, so as to have a good strong range of arches with a cornice or string-course above, whether supported on massive piers or sturdy pillars.

It really is a great advantage, and it really can be gained by practice in the study of all or any of the three arts, to be able to see things for oneself, without illustrations. I know they are very nice, and "generally" necessary ; but much may be done without them by effort of the mind. Fergusson's *Architecture* contains all that can be wanted, and reference to it is very easy ; with D'Agincourt and Parker, he is sufficient. But those who wish to see the typical varieties of the arcade best illustrated on constructive principle had better look at the *Stones of Venice*, vol. i. chap. xii. pp. 139, 140. I know no better or briefer view of the different principles, Classical, Byzantine, Romanesque, and Gothic, of putting a heavy load on piers or pillars. It is the converse account to Mr. Fergusson's, which begins historically from the classical arcades, pillars, entablature, piers, and arches together, and shows how the construction was simplified down to pillars and arches. Professor Ruskin begins as the builder would begin his work, by setting up the pillars first, and then illustrating the different methods of superimposition, or putting on the weight in the strongest and most compact manner. Both agree as to the main fact, that pillars and arch-piers together are unsatisfactory, because one of the two must evidently be strong enough to carry the wall and roof, and then the other must infallibly look in the way. To put

Professor Ruskin's distinction of forms and principles as shortly as possible, it seems to amount to this :—

In the Classical form, or the Palladian, which is Renaissance-Classical, the central pillar is bold and strong, and pretty well able to carry the wall without the arches. It puts in a claim to do the whole work, and does not do it ; which is, in fact, the fault pointed out by our other authority.

In the pure Byzantine construction, and in the Italian Romanesque, you have strong pillars and arches, and a wall upon them. This is best ; you see just how things are done, and there is no mistake about the work.

But you may think that the pressure of the wall above, if heavy, will be too much for the arches. In that case you will rest a small pillar on each capital, and have an upper range of columns in the wall, so as to carry the weight of the roof direct to the main shafts. This form—strong pillars below and lighter pillars on their heads, with a cornice, strengthening the wall up to the roof—is the purest Northern Gothic, found chiefly in Early English, and also in Lombardic.

Or you may carry your small upper pillar down to the ground in front of the main shaft, dividing that in two. You may increase its real or apparent size, so as to make it a solid column in front of the arch-piers, and so return to the Classical-Composite arcade. Or you may carry it down in a slighter form, and group it with the two sides of the main shaft ; in which case you exemplify the general French Gothic and French Romanesque principle, as shown in great purity at Valence. And as these small shafts are generally Northern and connected with steep vaulted roofs, they are called *vaulting shafts*.

Let us see how far we have got in our transition-history from the Greek horizontal architecture towards the Gothic vertical lines. In the first place, we have had a good deal about the soaring gyres and spirals, and the upward tendency of the perspectives of the dome. In the next place, away from the dome and all along our naves, we have so far broken up cornices and entablatures that our chief horizontal perspective is now the long order of columns, drilled like the legion's ordered line, and conveying the strongest ideas of

concert and of brotherhood, and therefore of power, calm, and discipline. Instead of looking along one horizontal entablature, our eyes are carried along twenty or thirty vertical columns; and we have two perspectives accordingly—one of our vanishing points is towards the horizon, where the lines of roof, galleries, capitals, and floor meet; and the other is towards the zenith, where all the diameters of the columns would meet. Horizontalism and verticalism are combined; and they must always command the mind and the eye. The human gaze cannot be stopped from following a perspective, whether its owner knows what the term perspective means or not.

In good Byzantine, then, or Italian Romanesque, where there are no vaulting shafts, the vertical tendency is much subdued. Where the short or English style of vaulting shaft is used, with its base resting on the capital of a main pillar, the eye is more decidedly carried upwards, and the vertical lines more pronounced. Still, in both these cases we travel up story by story, as it were, and one order is set fairly on another, with string-courses or wall cornices, so that the horizontals are in full force also. But when the vaulting shaft is carried down to the ground, through and in front of the main column, then another important step is taken in the Gothic or vertical direction. For then we have not only a perspective line, but a constructive rib of column, carrying our eyes to, or at least towards, the roof. It is the nature of every draughtsman and builder, who has the least turn for composition, to carry lines straight through; and hence the regular pointed-Gothic transition was soon made of leading the eye into the high roof, and quite up to the zenith. Thus the vaulting shafts, belonging to Northern architecture, and used by men more accustomed to build with timber than with stone, come at length to carry the eye upward as pine trunks do in a Norwegian forest. Of course, when they came to be multiplied and grouped, and the clustered shaft came into full force, every line in the cluster carried the eye up with a power of its own, and the vertical effect became that which Kingsley so admirably described by the word "uprushing."

All this made great changes in the Roman Basilica; which had its horizontals changed into verticals (as it got up

northwards, and Saxons began to build "*more Romano*"), and at home became fourfold or cruciform. Meanwhile the higher latitudes also involved higher roofs. There was so much more Northern rain or snow to throw off, that the outside of the church had to be put in the most weather-proof shape the builders could think of. Hence the lofty roofs, and the square, or polygonal, or cylindrical tower-roofs, running up to higher ridges or points—in a word, the Spires. Hence also the buttresses without ; resisting the thrust of the high roof, and leading the eye upwards without allowing it to escape ; and hence all the varieties of dripstone cornice ; hence pinnacles to peg the roof-thrust down to the wall, and all the complications of roof-drainage, which found space for all the "Gothic laughter" of quaint gutters and gurgoyles. And people whose hearts did aspire towards heaven, and who had, as I hope we all have, unscientific notions and hopes of a dwelling in or beyond the heavens, naturally invested the up-rushing lines outside, and inside, with the idea of gazing up into heaven, and desiring to ascend thither, where the Lord ascended. Exactly in the same way, centuries before, those whose minds were full of associations of the Cross had seen the cruciform design in the transept of the Basilica. So also, no doubt, Rolf and Regner, or Gurth and Wamba, may have thought of their forest glades in minster aisles ; remembered how they had often bound poles together for gables of woodland shelter ; or noticed the intersection¹ of rounded arches, and so hit off the pointed form in stone ; especially as it was so well adapted to high-pitched roofing. A vast system of symbolism grew, in a natural way, out of vertical architecture ; but the building preceded and caused the symbolism, though of course that reacted on it in its turn. We can hardly suppose that the German-Gothic mind had any qualities of religious aspiration which Giotto's and Angelico's did not possess ; or that, as Mr. Ruskin puts it, "The early Christians were not quite as heavenly-minded, when they built basilicas, or cut conchas out of the catacomb, as were ever the Norman barons or monks."

These then were the steps, architecturally speaking, of the

¹ For these and other rudimentary forms, see D'Agincourt, *Arch.* vol. iv. pl. xlvii.

Græco-Gothic progress from horizontal to vertical. Within the church the entablature was broken up, and the wall supported on the capitals of the pillars. (This involved the use of the horseshoe arch, the stilted arch, and other means of additional height.) The entablature vanished, and the vaulting shafts began to lead the eye to the roof, or to high windows and the light beneath it. Out of doors the roof itself was constantly brought to a loftier ridge, and buttressed right up to it. Both within and without the horizontal separation of stories was less and less marked; and everywhere the pointed arch took the place of the round.

As for examples, I think only a few great historical ones, which connect styles, or mark the transference of style from one country to another, need be mentioned here, such as those already described, or S. Vitale, at Ravenna, and Galla Placidia's Chapel, which are our next step; the one, as the connecting limb between the Catacomb Chapel and the Cruciform Church; the other, St. Vitale, as in all probability connecting Eastern with Western architecture, Charles and Otho with Constantinople, Aachen with Ravenna. For the rest, Parker's *Glossary of Architecture* contains short essays on all the styles and their transitions, with ample lists of English examples. Only let all who go to France be Professor Ruskin's words in mind, for study of the round arch, and its transition into pointed.

"The whole great French school of rounded architecture," he says, "has origin in the rich conditions of sculpture, which, rising first out of imitations of the Roman bas-reliefs, covered all the façades of the French early churches with one continuous arabesque of floral or animal life. If you want to study round-arched buildings, do not go to Duham, but go to Poitiers.¹ Then trace this architecture forward in Central France, until, just at the moment of transition into the Pointed style, you have the consummate type of the sculpture of the school given you in the west front of the Cathedral of Chartres." Finally, he refers to Amiens, in particular to its south transept door, and to the transepts of Rouen Cathedral, as culminating examples of the perfected Gothic. All are

¹ *The Two Paths*, Lect. I. pp. 33—41.

accessible by photograph, and so indeed are all those I have referred to. In the pure Gothic, the Græco-Roman types are absorbed and vanish; there remains only the vital principle of observing nature for subject and guidance in all ornament. It is study by different minds and eyes, and hearts and tastes; but Greeks or Goths alike looked without and around them for the beautiful. Gothic sculpture, however, is quite beyond our range, and we have not come yet to such as may have appeared in the earlier Basilicas, and more frequently in sepulchral churches.

Galla Placidia, Augusta, as wife of Constantius III. (made Augustus by Honorius) prisoner of Alaric and his successor, Ataulphus, had had her full share of troubles in this world. It might be interesting to compare her distresses with those of Claudia or Pudenciana. Her misfortunes, terrors, and temptations must have been a curious converse or reverse of theirs. The empire was Christian in her day; but it was hard to know what a Christian empire meant; and harder yet to know what Christianity was. She was long Vice-Empress of the West, and she was more likely to be tempted to oppress others on matters of faith than to suffer for it herself. Like the "certain honourable matron" to whom St. John writes, she and her fortunes may almost be taken as symbolic of the Western Church of her time. A new form of terror pressed on the Church; not from the Empire, but through the Empire, for the Church was now herself Imperial, and shared, with all its social order, the terrors of the Gothic onset. Placidia's life covers the interval between Alaric and Attila; and no ruler of Italy, and probably but few private persons of that day, can well have lived otherwise than in terror and distress. It is possible that she did pay too exclusive attention to Church matters for a secular Empress. She must have been like many others at that time, inclined to despair of the visible world and the way of it, to leave the combat of affairs, and pass away into the silent life. In those days people earnestly and longingly believed in and contemplated the Lord's coming, the earth having so great need of Him. But there is no doubt that her ascetic or monastic view of life did make the Empress intolerant in matters of faith; and


perhaps too lax, in secular government, to control Ætius and Boniface, or bring up her young Valentinian as either Christian or soldier. Could any woman have done either? She must, at all events, have endured to extreme weariness before the time came for her to be laid in her grave beside the sea. There are some considerations about what we may call the Byzantine or Neo-Greek mind and character which it is more convenient to bring in when we come to the subject of the Mosaics. For hitherto we have dealt entirely with architecture in the constructive sense, from the Temple to the Basilica, and from thence to the Cruciform Church. We have said nothing of the decoration of the Basilica, either by mosaic or sculpture, or by any other mode of wall-painting. The ornaments of the Basilica, and the kind of art employed upon it, are fairly part of our subject, and cannot well be omitted; and the glowing incrustation of Placidia's Chapel is almost our earliest and most interesting example. But the constructive form of the building comes first; then the Church of S. Vitale must be noticed as typical of the round or octagon church, derived from the circular temple or peristyle (also called basilica in these papers, in an excusable, though unscientific way). Finally, a sketch of the Cathedral at Aachen is required, because it will illustrate the adaptation of the circular-temple form directly into Christian-Gothic use.

The tomb of Placidia might be called her grave beside the sea at the time of its building; for in those days the Adriatic nearly reached the walls of Ravenna, and what is now the little village of Classe was the harbour where rode the Classis, or Roman Imperial fleet. When I was there in 1871 I had to mount the campanile of S. Apollinare in Classe (the only one in or near the city then considered safe, or at least safely accessible), before the sea was visible. The great Pineta, the unspeakably interesting and beautiful woods of the sea-pine, which extend so far to the north of the city, probably extend over what was once a lagoon, like that of Venice. Ravenna was never symbolically wedded to the Adriatic year by year, nor actually kept in proper relation to its free tides¹ by

¹ There is a tide of about three feet rise and fall in the Adriatic, which sometimes, I am told, obtrudes itself, mildly but firmly, all over the Piazzetta and S. Mark's Square.

regular canals, and is now fairly stranded for ever. A glance at the map will show how the two cities, Ravenna and Venice, lie north and south of the river Po, in tracts of marsh which are still being gradually raised and added to by the deposits of streams less powerful than the great central river. All the waters of Lombardy convey to the Adriatic vast masses of the finer sediment washed from the sides of the Southern Alps, and to this continual building forward of the coast are due the peculiar scenery and phenomena of the Lagunes. "It is enough for us to know," as Professor Ruskin says, "that from the mouths of the Adige to those of the Piave there stretches, at a variable distance of from three to five miles from the actual shore, a bank of sand, divided into long islands by narrow channels of sea. The space between this bank and the true shore consists of the sedimentary deposits from these and other rivers, a great plain of calcareous mud . . . sometimes consolidated by art, and sometimes by time, into ground firm enough to be built upon, or fruitful enough to be cultivated." The rise of the soil is best understood by the appearance of the other great sepulchral monument of Ravenna, the tomb of Theodoric above described, where the great range of arches and piers, which form the lower story, are now filled up to the soffits of the arches with the spongy earth, or at least were so in 1871. The ancient harbour or lagunes of Ravenna, where they are not occupied by the Pineta, are now waving with vines and Indian corn, and in the hot May nights all the earth and air are starred with glow-worms or fire-flies, rich with the full night-scent of the grape-flower, and vocal with powerful frogs.

The tomb of Placidia is almost a Greek cross, and must have been built before 450. It is, in fact, a Roman cella memoriae; but the circular form is abandoned for the cruciform, which gives it its great architectural interest. It resembles, in some points, a cubiculum of subterranean Rome, at the intersection of two ambulacra or galleries. Three limbs of the cross make room for three sarcophagi. They are those of the Empress and her brother and son, the Emperors Honorius and Valentinian, and remain in their places. The body of Placidia could be seen within her tomb till some



years since, when a number of idle choir-boys were allowed to introduce a lighted candle to show it, which soon caught and consumed the dust of the daughter of Theodosius. How edifying is the reverent care of the Church of Rome for antiquity! The rest of the little temple, only thirty-five by thirty internally, is taken up by its central altar and choirs. There is a plan in Fergusson's *Architecture*, vol. i. p. 438 (as also of the tomb of Theodoric, and S. Vitale), and all these are described and illustrated more fully by D'Agincourt. It seems as if the cruciform idea in Placidia's church had been derived from the catacombs, and this may be confirmed by the church's containing one of the few Good Shepherds to be found in mosaic, or above ground. It has been observed how strangely and suddenly the use of this chief and earliest of all forms of symbolic Christianity was discontinued in the basilicas, though still repeated or retained in the catacombs. But in this small sepulchral church, not a basilica at all, but a roof on solid walls, and as strong as a catacomb, the Good Shepherd appears in bright mosaic, with distinct resemblance to earlier pictures of the same subject, and of the mystic Orpheus found in the Callixtine cemetery.¹

Great interest attaches to Justinian's round church of S. Vitale at Ravenna.² It was the first Byzantine dome built in Italy, and the lightness and elegance of its design, with the important subjects and extraordinary beauty of its decoration, made it unrivalled in the Western world among churches of its class. Builders in earlier times seem generally to have felt this, particularly in the time of Charles the Great. He certainly copied it for his own tomb at Aachen, and many architects adopt its ideas in constructing circular buildings. Mr. Fergusson calls it rather Roman than Byzantine, and says that it is built on the plan of the Temple of Minerva Medica at Rome. Like that, and the Pantheon, its plan displays the inconvenience (as far as appearances go) of a portico

¹ The latest Good Shepherd is supposed to be one of the twelfth century (?) in the Campo Santo of Pisa.—Rohault de Fleury, *L'Evangile*, Planche 72, vol. ii.

² The best and fullest account, gloriously illustrated, of the ancient buildings and mosaics of Ravenna is that by A. F. von Quast, *Die Alt-Christlichen Bauwerke in Ravenna*, Berlin, fol. 1842. See also Freeman's *Sketches*.

or atrium stuck on to a circular building, and depriving its curves of their sweep and *aplomb*. Its dome is but small¹ compared with the grand extent of the others, and does not display the beautiful science of the builder of Minerva Medica, in putting his buttresses exactly where they ought to be, and in such admirable proportions of strength. S. Vitale is not scientifically domed, but the excellence of its material has caused it to stand the wear and tear of thirteen centuries, with the protection of a wooden roof.

The vault is built entirely with baked wine-jars or amphoræ, the point or tail of one fitting into the open mouth of the other. In the upright walls of the dome they are simply amphoræ; in the vault of the cupola a special kind of vessel, like a chimney-pot with the tail of a squirt, has been resorted to, and the whole thing has stood like a rock ever since it was finished. This is a common expedient in the East to the present day. I well remember how the light battlements to the house-roofs of Tiberias and elsewhere (commanded Deut. xxii. 8²) were built with hollow cylinders like drain-tiles, or with actual crockeryware; and how pleasing the effect always was! As an employment of special material it is admirable, but the *constructive* skill of the earlier builders had left the workmen of New Rome. Nevertheless, in building S. Vitale, the Byzantines or Neo-Romans, half Eastern as they were, gave an important lesson to all Europe. And nothing can be more piquant and interesting, more subtle and teasing, better calculated to make writers quarrel horribly, and readers wonder for what reason, than the process of distinguishing between the Eastern-classical influence and the Western-classical influence in Northern Europe. It is the same in painting, mosaic, sculpture, and architecture. What and how much instruction did Niccolà Pisano get from the "certain Greeks" whom Vasari mentions, before he saw the Chase of Meleager? Did Cimabue learn anything from Byzantines? or Tafi or Torrita, or the

¹ Diameter of external circle (or octagon) one hundred feet, that of internal only fifty.

² "When thou buildest a new house, then thou shalt make a battlement for thy roof, that thou bring not blood upon thine house, if any man fall from thence."

Venetian mosaicists? how far Greek were they, and how far had they the impudence to teach Italians anything? How about the earlier *Schola Græca* in Rome? Here are the materials of very pretty quarrels, which we trust may never quite cease.

There is no doubt, at all events, that Charles the Great, in whom the classic age transmigrates into the mediæval, took S. Vitale of Ravenna for his leading idea,¹ or allowed it, or suggested it to his architect, when he built the cathedral at Aachen. The stages of its construction seem to be as follows:—In the first place it was a round church, of Byzantine Classical idea. Charlemagne, says Mr. Fergusson, as Emperor of the Romans, seems to have felt it necessary to have a tomb which should rival that of Augustus or Hadrian, while, as he was a Christian, it should follow the form of that of Constantine, or the most approved model of the circular church; which was that which had been elaborated not very long before at Ravenna. Nevertheless the external and internal construction, especially in the vaultings of both stories, is essentially Gothic, and we probably possess the ancient church of Charles the Great in all main respects as he left it. The mosaic ornament has perished, and with it the original surface of the interior, so that the remainder must be considered as a skeleton.

The original round church was, in fact, a polygon of 16 sides, about 105 feet in diameter; and internally, the dome, of 47 feet across, was supported by eight compound piers, and almost equal in height to the external diameter of the building. Internally there were four stories, two ran over the side aisles and were boldly cross-vaulted; a third gallery was open to the roof, and there were eight windows above giving light to the dome. The altar was in a semicircular niche to the east, until the present choir was built in 1353. Charles lay beneath the central dome until the French scattered his bones abroad. His sarcophagus retained its ancient carving of the Rape of Proserpine. With such irony

¹ Mr. Bryce says the German cathedral was built on the model of that above the Holy Sepulchre. No doubt it was, as to being round; but S. Vitale was the *constructive* model. See Freeman, *Sketches*, "Aachen Revisited," p. 70.

had Greek art followed the Christian Emperor to the grave! Over his empty tomb there yet hangs a huge chandelier, the gift of Frederick Barbarossa; there are some remnants of the mosaics, and the columns he procured from Ravenna by gift of Hadrian I. appear to be yet *in situ*.¹ He had the idea of a second New Rome in his own land. To the west the original structure had a bold tower-like adjunct, with twin towers containing staircases. It is probable that Otho III. built a long tomb-house for himself behind the altar, and that the restorer or rebuilders, in 1353, skilfully connected both buildings, Otho's grave remaining in the centre of the new eastern end.

This church, then, connects Constantine with Charles the Great. And D'Agincourt gives the ground plans of two dromical or oblong Basilicas of Charles's construction, which he justly admires from their grand classical simplicity of design. They are, in fact, regular types of the old three-aisled building with its circular apse. The one is the ancient Basilica of the Holy Apostles in Florence, mentioned by Vasari in the *Proëmia delle Vite*; the other has an interest for us as the church of the Vicus Saxonum, or Saxon quarter at Rome, and was situated on the left of the Colonnade of S. Peter's.

The age of Charles the Great was a momentous one for Europe, and is perhaps, after all, the most convenient period at which to divide the classical age from the mediæval; or rather, it closes the age of complete transition. By the time of his death the boundaries of the Eastern and Western Empire were determined; and, with far worse result even to our own days, the Western half of the Church was absolutely allied with the Pope against the Eastern. The Filioque controversy was opened to complete the division of Christendom; and the policy of the Italian Rome—eternal enmity to the Rome of Constantine—was fully established. Another, and that the most formidable and abiding, of all the waves of Northern invasion was breaking over Europe towards the end of the great Emperor's days. The Northmen were harrying Saxon and French coasts alike; they had perhaps already

¹ D'Agincourt, vol. i. p. 41; *Arch.* pl. xxv. 12; and 9 and 13.

reached Constantinople on the east, as stranger-auxiliaries, Varinger, or Varangians, Micklegarth, they called it, the Great City—as Turks and Tartars in other days, and to this day, call it, Stamboul “(ἡ τὴν βολὴν),” “to the City.” However, they entered the Mediterranean. It is said to have distressed Charles in his latter days to see their “sea-dragons” there ; to know, in all probability, that the labour of his great life would all pass away with his life ; to see only, or chiefly, the swords of the Northmen and the Saracens once more shaken over such reconstruction of peace and law as he had effected for Europe. He might partly be aware that the Saracens were preserving secrets of knowledge for Europe in after time. A man so little capable of selfish or mean motive, and so widely desirous of the good of all whom he served and ruled, would have shown less sorrow at the sight of the Danish ravens in his Roman lake, if he had known that they were precursors of the Norman rule of discipline and their grammatical ordering of life, in peace and war, in mutual fealty, in law, thought, and language. He might have felt a certain remorse for the destruction of Desiderius and the Lombard kingdom in the quarrel of the Popes, had he known how Hadrian’s successors, leagued with both Normans and Saracens, would break the yoke of his empire on the field of Civitella. And if it has been permitted him to see (as it may be to the redeemed and forgiven) what has followed from the fatal division of the Churches ; how papal Italy has twice given up Constantinople to ruin ; and how all Europe has to suffer in our own days from the results of the Turkish occupation of the Eastern Empire—if Charles, once the Great, is allowed to be conscious of all this—in the first place, he is assuredly comforted by faith in the great end to God’s glory ; in the next, he may further rejoice in that it was given him while he lived to prevent miseries and evils which modern civilisation cannot mitigate, and in fact only increases, by means of her various and infernal devices of mutual destruction.

The arts of wall-painting and sculpture may be said to have expired in Charlemagne’s days ; or rather sculpture was already dead, and the last traces of the old work in mosaic

were vanishing, for the time. Architecture was making the great transition from Roman to German vaulting which the cathedral at Aachen so admirably illustrates.¹ The remnants of mosaic there were probably executed by Greeks, and mosaic ornament seems to have been used, not only in remembrance of S. Vitale, but because the ancient glories of Christian bas-relief were utterly departed, and no classical sculptor was left who could cover a cornice with historical design ; as no Goth had yet risen north of the Alps to carve the thoughts of his race upon church-walls. Otherwise, if any monk-artist had been at the Emperor's court who inherited any of the science of the fourth century, such as produced the sarcophagi of Junius Bassus and of Probus and Proba, the Church would hardly have allowed her Kaiser to be buried in marble adorned with the Rape of Proserpine. On the other side the Alps, the Lombard sculptors had almost to a certainty begun their work ; very different indeed, as we have so often said, from the Eastern or ascetic Byzantine. They taught sculpture to the North in after days, for they chose the subjects all Northmen understood. They were essentially smiths, foresters, and wood-workers ; and accordingly woodcraft came next after war, and that very closely on the heels of religion, on their great church-fronts.

Perhaps most of us associate one feature in particular with Italian-Lombard architecture, the great lions or griffins which support columns in porches and façades. These are not, however, simple combinations of woodcraft with religion. The griffin form had been known to civilisation since Nineveh, since early Egyptian dynasties, since Moses, and the forms or patterns shown him in the Mount of God. Whether it be true or not that the word Cherub, or Mighty One, is the same word at Gryps, griffin, or imagined compound of lion's might and eagle's wings, the Lombard architect-sculptors re-created the symbol in their own way and out of their own hunter-heads ; investing it all the time with a solemn and

¹ On the cover of Mr. Bryce's *Essay on the Holy Roman Empire*, which all students of history well know, is the image and superscription of the first German Kaiser or Cæsar. Its reverse is the towers of Aachen, with the top of the cupola faintly indicated behind.

earnest meaning, perfectly Scriptural, and in our days far too nearly forgotten. It will be very useful to the reader to look at the third volume of *Modern Painters*, Plate I., p. 106, or else to turn to pp. 47-53 of *The Art Teaching of the Primitive Church*, where some account is given of the cherub-symbolisms. The point is, just for us at present, that the use of the mystic wheel by the side of the Lombard griffin refers the spectator (as it unquestionably does) to that description of Ezekiel's first vision,¹ which can be properly characterised by no human words that I know of. But it is connected, on the one hand, with the cherub-symbolisms of the Temple of Solomon and of the earlier Tabernacle; on the other, with S. John's Vision of the Four Creatures or *Zôa* of the Apocalypse, and the close of the Canon of Holy Scripture; and of this the early mosaicists and miniaturists, and the Lombard carvers, were well aware, as we shall hereafter see more clearly.

Charles the Great was on better terms with the Popedom, and even with the Greek Empire, than with the Lombards, who had certainly been hard enough, in their time of power, on both the others. And as we shall see hereafter, his mind was turned chiefly (in decorative or didactic art) to book-illumination and miniature. Perhaps he was the first and greatest Teuton who understood the value of the Word written, and how thoughts conveyed only by the pen of the scribe really may direct the councils of statesmen and the march of nations.

A few more remarks are now to be made about building materials in different styles, periods, races, and climates. A little has been said about stone and timber in speaking of the Gothic transition, and it does not seem desirable to say much here on the matter; nevertheless there are a few salient observations, easily remembered, which may be of some use to travellers, and to all of us when we look at buildings as they stand. Besides which, the original material of a building has much to do with its decoration, and to that subject we are drawing near in our sketches of the Basilica.

¹ Ezekiel i.


PART II.—DECORATION.

CHAPTER VIII

MATERIALS AND MOSAIC ORNAMENT.

THE word Basilica is probably the best which could have been used to head a sketch of the transitions of Christian architecture, properly so called. It expresses the form of the earliest Christian churches. Nothing has yet been said about their materials; and as the Church Catholic has been, and is destined to raise her temples all over the world, and all national and local methods of building depend on what is to be had to build with, she will vary their form and arrangement accordingly. Their decoration, again, will depend on their architecture; and it may perhaps be as well, therefore, that before we go on to the mosaics and the sculpture which adorned Greek, Roman, Lombard, and Northern buildings, we may form some idea of principles of natural fitness, and understand how decoration, and decorative taste also, must vary according to the means with which builders and artists are supplied.

For example, mosaics are more properly used in a brick building than a stone one; in a craven, or catacomb, or a church of cognate architecture, than in a Gothic cathedral of fine stone; in a hot bright eastern climate than in France, England, or Germany. Materials affect ornament naturally, because they influence construction. In Egypt, the rectilinear and horizontal character of the architecture, say Messrs.



Texier and Pullan, and the employment of innumerable columns, suited a country which furnished shafts and blocks of unlimited size, as did the quarries of porphyry and grey or red granite. The builders had only to cut blocks from the mountain's side of the dimensions required for the erection and covering of their temples. And of course, when your construction is marble or fine stone, your ornament is sculptural. Then again the Egyptian surface ornament, its excellences of sharp and shallow cutting, reliance on accurate outline, the great sense of character which followed as a matter of course, its breadth, solidity, and dignity of endurance like the everlasting hills—all this depends on the hardness of granite. Marble is comparatively soft, plenty of it is cream-white, you can modify line or form in it with a light touch of chisel or rasp ; its texture expresses light, shade, and projection as well as paper and chalk, and better ; it is made for sculpture of beauty. Granite is intensely hard ; if you are to carve anything in it, it must be by heavy blows ; you cannot cut the fingers of a hand in high separate relief in it, because you would knock them all off before you had marked the joints in one. Granite is made for sculpture of awe and power, for temples of eternal record, for monumental history. Had the Greeks tried to work in granite, and the Egyptians in marble, the records of Abou Simbel would have perished long ago, and the Venus de Medici, as Ruskin says, would look like some exquisitely graceful description of frog.

In Egypt then, where the best limestone and sandstone for building, and the best granite and porphyry for ornament, were ready to hand in unlimited quantity, the architecture was entirely and in all respects a stone architecture, the decoration in its more striking features sculptural,¹ both in bas-relief and in detached statuary, and the whole powers of the builder were directed to the use of unlimited means with unlimited power. Hence the colossal character of their buildings, and their eternal endurance. The Pyramids are

¹ I know there is indefinite use of colour ; but it begins as an addition to bas-relief, and is continued for record and historical or descriptive purposes ; it is subordinate both to architectural construction and glyptic decoration.

like natural features in a landscape. All travellers will tell you the same story of how they impress them with the idea of a human work taking rank in actual greatness with a minor hill or a cliff, or some marked detail of the work of God. Whether one sees them (as one generally does for the first time) towards evening from the train running into Cairo from Alexandria, purple against the unnameable hues of the afterglow, or (as one oftenest takes leave of them in starting for Sinai) grey or rose-tinted shadows on the pink African desert—they take the sunrise or sunset like mountains and no less. Well, as we have said, the Parthenon, though not so vast, is built on the same principle of unlimited liability, defying time and crime, the great enemies; and so are many Sicilian temples and the colonnades of Pæstum. All this is stone or marble architecture; horizontal and of the lintel: not incrustated or plated with any richer material, but showing what it is; adorned with devices cut in its own substance, or jewelled with yet richer stones, as the rarer marbles, granites, and porphyries. Its construction should be of superfluous strength, and it is regardless of expense, sometimes in the sternest sense.

Greece, then, so far resembled Egypt in her great early buildings. But the construction of Rome was all brick, and therefore much nearer akin to the early works of Assyria and Babylonia. These earlier architects had neither wood nor building stone; and they adopted a style of construction quite unlike their contemporaries in the valley of the Nile. They had to use bricks, sometimes only sunburnt.¹ Consequently they had to build immensely thick and massive walls, in the first place, and to use arcades, instead of architraves, in the second. There is no doubt that the vault appeared in Assyria in times of the most remote antiquity. Further, as to decoration: "Nineveh was built on a stratum of alabaster, and that material was employed for the decoration of her public buildings. There, the column, the most elegant and varied feature of architecture, is entirely wanting; it is to be found only in Persepolis, a town situated at the foot of a high limestone mountain, which furnished blocks of every

¹ The Babylonian bricks were baked in kilns.—*Herodotus*, i. 179.

dimension" (Texier and Pullan, *Introd.* p. 1). The brick-builders of Babylon had the immense advantage of bitumen for cement. "Brick had they for stone, and slime instead of mortar;" and the use of the arch, vault, and cupola followed quite naturally.

Let us repeat that what we call a brick would not have passed for one in Roman times or before. The classical brick was much more like a large square tile, one and a half inch thick, and it will be seen how easily such materials bound into round arches. The Lydian form, so called, was the smallest, about one foot by one and a half inch; then the tetradoron and pentadoron, four or five palms square. The excellence of the mortar used from the Augustan age (and indeed long before) down to the later successors of Constantine, made both Greeks and Romans rather prefer brick walls in the matter of strength; they were held to resist the battering-ram better in fortification (Texier and Pullan, p. 5), being more of a single mass like a rock, and capable of being beaten to powder at a given point, without much shock to the construction elsewhere. They were used like ashlar-work for the outer shell of a great wall, its core being formed of concrete.

The *opus reticulatum*,¹ like the meshes of a net, was the native or truly Roman form of stonework. It consists of small square long-shaped blocks of peperino, or of the lithoid or building-tufa of Italy, and is hardly to be found out of the peninsula. When used with pumice-stone, it made walls and arches of wonderful lightness and strength, especially when it was also cemented (as was often the case) with the Puzzuolana-sand cement, which was to the Romans what bitumen was to the Babylonians. The blocks were about six inches long, and were generally used as facing over internal rubble-work. Masonry was called *certum* if in square stones, *incertum* if there was any irregularity of form. Walls of the latter sort were often bound together by angles and horizontal courses of good brickwork. The Romans had of course learnt how to build round arches in large blocks of stone from the Etruscans.

¹ See D'Agincourt, *Architecture*, pl. 71, vol. iv., and text in vol. i.; also the Muro Torto in Rome, between the Porta del Popolo and the Villa Borghese.

All visitors to Rome remember the opening of the Cloaca Maxima into the Tiber near the Temple of Vesta. It may well stand to this day, for it is formed of three tiers of arches one within the other, built of great hewn blocks, wedged into a mass without cement. The interior is a semicircular vault of about fourteen feet in diameter. Nevertheless the tetradoron or the pentadoron of fifteen inches square, and an inch and quarter thick, or smaller sizes in smaller edifices, were the chief materials of Roman buildings up to the time of Augustus ;—and when he said ¹ he had found Rome of brick (*lateritiam*) but left her marble, *marmoream*, he meant, not that he had reconstructed the city, but introduced the practice of incrustation and covering brickwork with marble. The relieving arch in large walls, where bricks are arrayed in solid arch form so as to hang together and save downward dead-weight pressure, is said to be an invention of his time.

The Byzantine builders of course used much the same material as the Romans. The Puzzuolana sand,² indeed, was sent in large quantities to Constantinople in the first instance, for building purposes, with other materials and decorations (used one-third, with one-third lime and one-third brickdust). But the principle of incrustation (and mosaic is only one form of incrustation out of many) seems to be derived altogether from the brick architecture of Greece and Rome, and from the great change which took place in the latter in Augustus's time.

Roman bricks are often historical documents on which dates and questions on other issues may depend. Every tetradoron or pentadoron had its date and the mark of its maker, down to the time of Justinian at earliest. The monogram of our Lord is often found on bricks used in church-building ; for secular architecture, the names of the consuls or emperors were used. We have seen at pp. 82 and 132 how this settles a really interesting question of date in the catacombs.³ The

¹ " Ut jure sit gloriatus, marmoream se relinquere, quam lateritiam accepisset." —SURTONIUS, *Octav.* 28.

² See Texier and Pullan, *Byzantine Architecture*, Introd.

³ T. Flavius Clemens, the husband, or possibly the brother, of S. Domitilla, was accused with her of Christianity, as a Jewish superstition, in the reign of Domitian, A.D. 95.

tomb or vault of S. Domitilla is the most ancient part of the catacomb or cemetery which bears her name, and in part that of her attendants SS. Nereus and Achilles. If the original tomb really was made to receive her body, we are sure that we possess the grave of a grand-daughter of Vespasian, a confessor, and the wife of a martyr. The case, as people say, is strong and clear in favour of the name Cæmeterium Domitillæ having belonged to the tomb (which is distinct from the later catacomb) from the earliest times ; and a strong feature of collateral evidence is that dated tiles found there go back to the times of Hadrian and Antoninus Pius, 117—161, scarcely more than twenty years from the death of Domitian—the last Flavian emperor—in 96.

A German scholar, Mr. P. E. Wiener, has traced the 22nd Legion in its movements through a great part of Germany by the bricks which bear its name, and Roman bricks have been found among the Silures, our friends of Shropshire and the Welsh marches (see Part I.), with the inscription, LEG. II. AVG., stamped upon them.*

Buildings may be sheeted or incrusted, with a stronger or more valuable material over one less durable or precious, either on the inside or the outside. We have nothing to do here with external incrustation ; the Duomo of Florence, and more especially the Campanile of Giotto, are its great mediæval-modern examples. It is not quite easy to understand the objection to all external "veneering" as disguising the actual material. There is no falsehood or imposition on the spectator in such ornament, because it at once proclaims itself for what it is, and nobody either supposes or is intended to suppose that the Campanile is built of solid blocks of fine marble. And as the great Florentine incrustations have lasted so well from Giotto's time to the present, that work may be considered durable enough when honestly and ably executed ; if not in a northern climate, still in Italy ; or if not on the outside of a building, still in its interior. Still when our building (as S. Paul's in London) is of fine stone, it must be considered a waste of good material, and unnecessary sacrifice of its beauty, to sheet it entirely with

* Smith's *Dictionary of Antiquities*, s. v. Later.

marble, however precious. In such cases, it seems to us the marble should be used in disks and panels, exactly like jewellery on a very large scale, and be placed in the walls as in a setting. This was done with the most beautiful results in the later mediæval buildings of Venice. (See *Stones of Venice*, Plate I. Vol. i.) Then there is the final question of architectural casuistry, how far are we bound to show our material in a building of fine brick, when we have marble enough to incrust it? Mr. Ruskin I think implies in his chapters on S. Mark's at Venice, that we may cover it up entirely if we like, because the result is indefinitely beautiful without any insincerity at all, as nobody thinks we are building in solid masses of precious material; any more than it was supposed that the gates of Ghiberti, in their fresh gilding, were cast in pure gold. This seems true and reasonable, and I think the result of the determined candour of the architect of Keble College, Oxford, is unfortunate as to effect; as the strong bright red of his interior brickwork sadly overpowers the russet marble. It should have been opposed everywhere, as in the nave, with green serpentines: or with green or grey marble jewelled again with porphyry "red as blood that gusheth from a vein."¹

So much for outer incrustation. I suppose if we were asked for a distinction between the terms Mosaic and Incrustation we should have to say that it depends chiefly on the size of the plates of marble. A surface of wall covered with large plates of marble was called a *Platonía* in Roman work. It might have a design; for the veining of two slabs of alabaster will determine how they should be set relatively to each other; the marble having a pattern of its own. But when we come to using black, white, and red, or any two of them, in geometrical or other planned forms, so as to convey ideas of our own, we may say that then mosaic begins. As to when it began to be used, that carries us back to the pomps of ancient Persia and the palace of Ahasuerus at Shushan, "Where were white, green and blue hangings, fastened with cords of fine linen and purple to silver rings, and pillars of marble . . . upon a pavement of red, and blue, and white,

¹ Dante, *Purgatorio*, ix.

and black marble" (Esther i. 6). The choice of colours here certainly indicates pattern or arrangement, though perhaps only in stripes or chequers, as in the red-black-and-white buildings of Damascus, and the red-and-white streaks of Cairene mosques to this day. At all events, Syrians, Greeks, and Romans learnt the art from Persia and the East, and the Romans used it lavishly, and carried it all over the empire, as, to do them justice, they did all other arts. Pliny says they first took to it in the time of Sylla. For examples of Roman mosaic pavements found in England, they are engraved in the *Vetusta Monumenta*, published by the London Society of Antiquaries. Those who can get into a good library will find very much in Ciampini's *Vetera Monumenta* and *De Sacris Ædificiis*. It is a quaint-looking work; but there are very few facts worth knowing about Roman-Christian and other antiquities which will not be found in it: and those who can appreciate the amount of skilled and well-read labour that has been bestowed on it will get perhaps a new notion of the old Roman scholars of the seventeenth century. What they did, they did in style; and even the photograph and Mr. Parker's valuable works only increase the value of Ciampini, by proving his substantial accuracy in all he affected.

The photographs, however, are all-important to those who can get at them; and I have taken down the following references from a single volume (No. XII.) of Mr. Parker's series. I believe they can be had separately, and for this chapter on materials and mosaics they will supply us with capital examples;¹ and when one gets at these or other good photographs of authentic remains of ancient Rome, *in situ* and as they are, it is well to take time over them, and to think of their history, and all the generations they have seen. Claudia and Pudens saw such brickwork put up; and well-dressed ladies, who look at it to-day, may be wearing long cream-white skirts in folds, and curled hair low on their fore-

¹ Materials: Fine first-century brickwork, Cælian Hill, Phot. 1755. Ditto, Palace of Domitian, Phot. 1756. Stone Arcade of Flavian emperors, and brickwork of Nero (Colosseum), Phot. 1762. Stone and brickwork bridge, Via Ostiensis, Phot. 1826. Compare D'Agincourt, *Arch.* vol. iv. pl. 71.

heads—just as Claudia dressed herself in her day, and in revival of Augustan fashion. May it, on the whole, be their only reproduction of the feminine-classical manners of that time! The great truly-hewn stones, and immortal clay of well-burnt Roman bricks, are as great memorials of the constructive art of Rome, as beautiful legs and torsos of the decorative skill of Greeks; and those who may not be able to go abroad may be able to enjoy some of the best thoughts of reflective travel, by indulging in a little reverie over one or two good photographs. The golden or purple light of Italy may be wanting in the picture; but Liddell or Mommsen will display it in the inner sunset-glow of history.

Now, as to all the names of various kinds of work in mosaic, I shall put them down with examples from photographs, referring either to Parker's List of Photographs, or to the lately published volume on Mosaic Pictures in the *Archæology of Rome*, for which I had the honour of writing some Appendices; or to both when possible. "*Mosaicum*," "*musivum*," "*musaicum*," "*mosibum*," and "*museum*," are all adjectives agreeing with "*opus* understood," and they all mean tessellated pictures in small cubes of marble, glass gilt or backed with gold and silver, of clay, or vitreous pastes, and so on.

"*Opus tessellatum*" must mean what we still call tessellated pavements which also form pictures; either in black-and-white only, or in colours. This work is generally used for floors; and the word "*lithostrotum*," Greek for pavement, seems to answer in the same way as a general term. Pliny applies the name to the celebrated picture of the Doves¹ which bears his name. (See Parker, Phot. 1695, Plate I. Vol. i. on Mosaics.) It may have been part of the flooring in the Palace of Attalus of Pergamus, whence it most probably came; though we know from Pompeii that mosaic pictures were inserted in walls or ceilings as well as floors at a very early date. There is an early second-century pavement, A.D. 120 (Parker, Phot. 1700, 1737, 1738, and Mosaics, Plate II.), which is all black-and-white of pattern planned to the room in Hadrian's

¹ *Nat. Hist.* xxxvi., 26—60.

private palace¹ to which it belonged. It represents birds and vegetation, with large vases at the corners, and a black border of guilloche, or intertwined pattern.

There is a curious detail in the Gospels connected with this kind of tessellation. The word pavement reminds every Christian reader of the "Gabbatha," the room, hall, or place so-called, in the prætorium, or palace, of Pilate at Jerusalem. The name points to the existence of some mosaic pavement there; and it appears that a mark of the special importance of the "Bema," or judgment-seat, a rostrum for the judicial sentences, or other solemn communications of a Roman prefect or general in command, was to place it on such a flooring. It seems, even, that a tessellated pavement was sometimes cemented to a surface of felt or canvas to be rolled up or carried with an emperor or general as a carpet of office for his "Bema," or tribunal, on special occasions. Suetonius says Julius Cæsar did so (*Cæsar*, xlv.), and no commander was less likely than he to indulge in personal pomp or superfluous ceremony. It is curious that M. Gustave Doré's enormous picture of Our Lord in the Prætorium should omit the only detail of the scene or building of which the Gospels tell us anything. There is a ruder kind of tessellated pavement in larger squares of black-and-white only in black lines on white ground, common in the houses of the early Empire. Work in very small dies of plain pattern, or white only, of diminutive size, is called "opus vermiculatum;" there is some in both the upper and under church of S. Pudentiana; and the ground of the great Barberini Mosaic (Ciampini, i. p. 81) is "vermiculatum" also. Then, "opus sectile," work in slices of marble carefully cut to form, and accented by outlines filled with colour, is exemplified (Parker, Phot. No. 1460, and Mosaics, Plate IV.), especially in the wonderful works now in S. Antonio Abbate, at Rome. The Tigress and Calf is really a great work of art, showing the highest power of representing animal character, cruel as the subject is. This kind of work has been revived by M. Salviati with excellent results, in the chapel at Windsor, now called the Memorial Chapel of the late Prince Consort. It is hard to

¹ *Privata Hadriana*, in the Regionary Catalogue.

say why mosaic of genuine marble material has invariably so good an effect. The beautiful semi-transparent whites have much to do with it, as they throw up the other colours so very well, and the blacks, sparingly used, are very powerful. But there is a cheaper material for this work recently introduced, which will prevail very generally: and that is Mr. Powell's opaque glass, which under certain rules, and in the subjects and patterns which we have unquestionably inherited from the Early Church will be of the greatest value in church decoration. It ought to be used in rather solid sheets or plates, and set in stone, so as to get rid of the idea of fragility, and entirely dismiss the notion of a built-up window. And in pictures of this kind, and all mosaic *pictures* representing actual events or scenes, the present taste for half-tint and subdued colour seems far too strong: the mosaics of a church should be like the illuminations of a rich Service-book, and tell in rich rejoicing hues, as in all the ancient work of Rome and Ravenna, which I have soon to speak of. However, "*opus sectile*" is work in comparatively large pieces of marble cut to form and incised where emphasis in form is needed.

The "*opus Alexandrinum*"¹ is mosaic pavement in geometrical forms for the most part. It was produced largely by the Cosmati family in after days, in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and is connected with the name of Beccafumi (died 1549) in the later Renaissance. The name, however, goes back to the use of precious marbles from Egypt, *vid* Alexandria, in Augustan Rome. "*Opus albarium*," seems to mean any small white tessellation.

The Doves, the S. Antonio Abbate Tigress, and the pavement from Hadrian's private palace, will give a sufficient idea of various kinds of fine mosaic of the best age, up to A.D. 120; though Mr. Parker places the second of these as late as Constantine. The two other examples are unquestionable, and there is one more, probably a Christian one, from the catacomb of S. Calixtus, now in the sacristy of the Church of S. Maria, in Transtevere, whereof later. This last example is of two small tombstones, one representing birds, the other a harbour with the Miraculous Draught of Fishes. The first

¹ Phot. 1711, Colonna Pavement, in Lateran.

is one of beautiful fine mosaic of the second century ; the second probably of the third.

For the term Cosmati-work, it derives from the family of Cosmati, and their continuance or revival of tessellation from the twelfth century. The chief masters of that name executed various and important pictures in mosaic, of which the one photographed by Mr. Parker, the work of James and Deodatus Cosmati, in the thirteenth century (340, 1948) is an excellent example. It represents our Lord setting free two slaves, one white and the other black, and is over the door of the church of the Redemptorists on the Cælian Hill. For their ornamental work, it consists much of ribbons of mosaic with small sparkling forms, sometimes inlaid spirally round columns. (See examples, Altar and Confession, Church of S. Cesareo, Parker, Mosaics, Plate XVII.) It has no artistic value, and conveys a disagreeable feeling of insignificance and wasted labour and marble.

Thus much for the various kinds of, or names for, mosaics, and we have now sufficient examples of the secular or ordinary work of that kind so as to know opus this from opus that. This whole system of decoration was imported, like other arts, by Roman conquest ; and it took root and grew with the magnificence of the Augustan age. As brick buildings were incrustated with marble without, they were sheeted with mosaic within. The work was ingenious, but never creative or really artistic. It never had any soul till the Church took it in hand. And then, most persons who will look at the pictures of SS. Cosmo and Damian and others, will say that it did acquire a soul, and that a new element had come into art once more. It may be gloomy, forbidding, grotesque, or ugly. I have heard a great deal of sarcasm about winking Madonnas and starveling saints—everybody knows what it is to be drenched, as Horace says, with Italian or other verjuice, about early Christian art. For the present, all there is to be said is that there are a thousand years of it from the Christian era to the Pisan Renaissance ; and that all the works of that time cannot be lumped together and taken an offhand view of, any more than a thousand new pictures in Burlington House. At the earliest period of

Christian art, as frescoes and sculptures prove to a demonstration, work was produced which was classical and pretty, and Italian-Greek in its style ; and it symbolized the Parables of our Lord and the miracles of His mercy. But no miraculous gift of drawing or colour could be expected ; and when the arts degenerated in heathen hands, they fell off in Christian hands also. That process went on till heathen art utterly died out, and was preserved in a faint way by Christians. All we have to show after the second century is Christian ; no Pagan work survives. Greece and her arts remain, but they are transformed into Neo-Greek or Byzantine. These lean forms and brilliant colours are all that is left of the schools of Pheidias and Praxiteles, and the great academies of the Augustan age. The Church in Rome was an absolutely Greek body for three hundred years. In services, literature, daily life and death, all down to the very names of Bishops of Rome inscribed in Greek upon their sarcophagi, the written, or the carved and painted language of Greece prevailed. And Greece herself, all that was left of her, having done with beauty, did unquestionably take up with Christian asceticism ; and showed it at once in her long-ago changed and ruined arts, which through good or evil she never would or could relinquish. After all Renaissance criticism about starveling saints, it remains to be said that the artists of these horrors were the lineal scholars and representatives of Pheidias and Myron, Polycletus and Praxiteles, Aristides and Apelles, Parrhasius and all the sculptors. But what was it had made the Neo-Greek art sad, and ascetic, and archaic, and starveling ? Was it that a certain number of Greeks had turned Christians by A.D. 312 ? or that before the Christian era they had all turned into a race of clever, supple, sinful slaves, and now saw a new and painful way to some better state than that ? They say art became stiff with her new religious standard ; I dare say she did ; she had got a backbone once more after many flaccid ages. And she had to be sad enough for many ages more, but at all events she had acquired a soul to be sad with.

It seems as if classicalists never consider the inanity and tediousness of second-rate classical work. Mr. Parker's

beautiful first- and second-century decoration, in stucco, mythologies and monsters, was never meant to be looked at attentively; the student experiences a sense of weary, fretful impatience and tedium in looking at hippocampi floundering on ceilings, and nymphs floundering on hippocampi; and their want of meaning is as tedious to some as the grave import of the early mosaics is unwelcome to others. Does it very much matter to the history of art whether these pretty things went on or ended? At all events, they came to an end; without Christian influence, and long before Constantine, and quite of themselves; and Greece did no more work in that style, but betook herself to saints and angels. I daresay the "Christian mobs" broke up a great deal of third-rate sculpture, but they never had the chance of murdering Pheidias. That had been done long ago, by his graceful and grateful fellow-countrymen. No doubt, as Greek artists and their patrons by the fifth century A.D. were chiefly people of ecclesiastical as well as religious interests and opinions, Greek art reflected their strength and weakness. They were not handsome; they did not care about their bodies enough. Their fathers had left them an inheritance of national shame and distress, and evil habits and broken nerves, and shattered voluptuous tastes, which made them despise and hate their flesh; unnaturally and wrongly, no doubt. But their weary contempt for the body enabled them to make such a protest on the part of the soul as all men must hear to this day. The purity and singleness of their faith lasted, at all events, much longer than the purity of the Athenian sculpture and painting.

Nevertheless, with the sixth and seventh centuries begins the period of Iconodulism, to be broken in on too roughly in the eighth century by Leo, the Isaurian soldier. The Empire had to be defended against both the North and the East, and he wanted men to fight rather than fast, to man his quinqueremes and close up in phalanx, rather than call on the Kalendar in general. He saw that the unity of the Holy Trinity, the one Godhead of Three Persons, was no longer the leading tenet of popular Christianity, and he saw the force Mohammedism had

gained from its strong monotheism. Therefore he fell with a heavy hand on all the revived polytheism of the people, and opened wounds by which the Eastern Empire bled to death.

Now, it is in the history of the mosaics more particularly that the development or degeneracy of Christian belief may be traced with considerable accuracy, and they throw a specially important light on *popular* thoughts about the spiritual world. For as S. John Damascenus observed in the eighth century, little aware of the various applications which might be made of his words, "Pictures are poor men's books"; and the bas-reliefs of the Gospel history, and the brilliant apses filled with imagery of the Church Triumphant in Heaven, and Militant or wandering in the symbolic wilderness, were great part of the Church's teaching for suffering people. And the mental sufferings of all thinking men and women within the bounds of civilisation must have been, to say the least, fearfully great from the end of the fourth century. They knew and felt the approaching destruction; in Rome most of all, since Rome herself was to be made the first example of condign punishment, and Alaric was to avenge the world upon her first in A.D. 410. It is to be remembered, too, that the monasteries and ecclesiastical bodies in general, by or through whom this mystic painting was done, had always the first news and the best prescience of misfortune. There are few more striking pieces of picturesque history than the forebodings of Arsenius, the monk-statesman, in *Hypatia*. He is telling Philammon what the world is like which he so longs to enter.

"These are the last days spoken of by the prophets, the beginning of woes such as never have been on the earth before. 'On earth distress of nations with perplexity, men's hearts failing them for fear, and for the dread of those things which are coming on the earth. I have seen it long. Year after year I have watched them coming nearer and ever nearer in their course, like the whirling sandstorms of the desert, which sweep past the caravan, and past again, and yet overwhelm it after all—that black flood of the northern barbarians. I foretold it, I prayed against it; but, like Cassandra of old, my prophecies and my prayers were alike unheard; I ceased


to pray for the glorious city, for I knew that her sentence was gone forth ; I saw her in the spirit, even as S. John saw her in the Revelation ; her, and her sins, and her ruin. And I fled secretly at night, and buried myself here in the desert to await the end of the world. Night and day I pray the Lord to accomplish the number of His elect, and to hasten His kingdom. Morning by morning I look up trembling, and yet in hope, for the sign of the Son and Man in heaven, when the sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the skies pass away like a scroll, and the fountains of the nether fire burst up around our feet, and the end of all shall come.' "

Men in great trial dwell naturally and rightly on their chief hope ; and the Church in Rome, Ravenna, and even Constantinople, seemed oftentimes to have no hope nearer than that shadowed forth in the Apocalypse. More particularly we should consider, if we are really to understand Christian feeling after the sack of Rome by Alaric, that that vast event, with its untold, unspeakable distresses, was to most believers a direct and visible sign of the Son of Man, and a token of the immediate end of the world. Rome was not in the fifth century the centre of a Western Church opposed to an Eastern, and claiming Christian authority over Western Europe. To the Church which saw her sack by Alaric, she was the mystic Babylon, drunk with the blood of the saints ; she was not the city of the temporal power of the Church but of her chief temporal sufferings, and agonies of extreme trial. Her ruin seemed a part of the Apocalyptic vision literally fulfilled, as indeed in a sense it was ; and after such an event it must have seemed, at least to Italy and the nearer Empire, as if the world would or could scarcely go on longer. S. Augustine wrote the *De Civitate Dei* after a time, and set before men the great ideal which they have thus so far imperfectly apprehended, of a spiritual city, begun here on earth, and reaching to heaven, in whose citizenship death, now, as it seemed, poured out against all the children of men, should only be a step of great promotion and perfect completion. Men set their hearts on Paradise and the presence of God in a way which we have difficulty in understanding,

interrupted sacrifice of Isaac to the Rock of Moses, from that to the history of Jonah by which our Lord foretold the resurrection, the picture-writing on the wall spoke in the universal language of the eye, and the catechumens looked and listened. And it was pretty much the same thing, one may think, *mutatis mutandis*, when Latin became the prevailing or cosmopolitan language, and the Gothic or Northern pilgrims crowded into Rome: certainly it must have been so when the first barbarian converts entered the Christian churches. The clergy taught them in great part by pictures representing the chief doctrines of the Faith; and according to the faith of the clergy for the time, according to their views of the doctrines vitally necessary for the people, and their own spiritual hopes and fears, would be the subjects they painted or inlaid upon their walls.

The Hellenic tendency to represent everything in graphic form, the longing to see with eyes, and to make an icon or image or symbol of the things unseen, became a snare to the Church in due time. Probably the downfall of paganism, and the vast numbers of half converted polytheists, who made their untaught and partial submission to the Church after 410, because the gods of Rome had failed her and them so utterly, forced idolatrous tendencies on her communities; the new converts being too many and too rude to learn the purity of the Faith. But in any case the progress of doctrine, and in part the development of error, is clearly traceable in the mosaic pictures of the first eight or nine centuries.

A short list of the earliest mosaics still in existence, or on late record, seems advisable here, though it may not be very lively reading, and a few remarks may follow as to the advance of Iconodulism beyond the limits of the ancient picture-teaching. The distinction holds good all along between pictures meant to be instructive and pictures meant to excite emotion. The former always continue the same; they are poor men's books of symbolic teaching, in history or doctrine; the latter, among untaught or unrestrained people, always become objects, as well as sources, of devout feeling; and may come to be worshipped themselves, besides, or instead of, assisting the soul to reverence God or His saints.



As all our chief examples are at Rome or Ravenna, it may be most convenient to arrange them in two parallel lists, century by century. This list and order are due to Mr. J. H. Parker ; but some of the pictures have ceased to exist.

ROME.

CENTURY IV.

S. Constantia. Vine mosaics and ornaments of vaultings.
Apse or tribune of the ancient Basilica of the Vatican : lost, but preserved in record by Ciampini.

CENTURY V.

Mosaics of S. Sabina. Church built 424, restored 795 ; pictures completed 824, probably by Eugenius II. Lost.
Sta. Maria Maggiore, 432—440. Incorrect restoration in one instance ; the figure of the B.V. substituted for one of the Magi.
Oratory of S. John Evangelist, 461—467.

CENTURY VI.

Mosaics of SS. Cosmas and Damianus.
S. Lorenzo F. le Mura, 577—590.

Of this century is the Transfiguration at Mount Sinai, and what remains of the mosaics of S. Sophia.

CENTURY VII.—ROME.

S. Agnese, rebuilt by Pope Symmachus (built by Constantine). Adorned with mosaics by Pope Honorius, 626—638. (The Patron Saint for the first time takes the Lord's place in the apse ; the Popes themselves in the mosaic.)
S. Stephen. Jewelled cross. S. Venantius, 642 ; many busts of our Lord and Angels. S. Peter ad Vincula. S. Sebastian.

CENTURY VIII.—ROME.

S. Mary in Cosmedin : S. Theodore : the Hand of God holding a crown over the Head of Christ, Who is seated on a throne, holding a jewelled cross. SS. Peter, Paul, and Theodore.
S. Pudenciana, 771—791. Christ enthroned, Cross and Saints, much restored.

RAVENNA.

CENTURY IV.

There was and still may exist in Russia (whither it is supposed to have been carried) a mosaic of the Lord in Glory, with two Angels, from S. Agatha's Church, A.D. 378.

CENTURY V.

Chapel of Galla Placidia.
Baptistry of S. John.
Ancient mosaic in Sta. Maria in Cosmedin, representing (*inter alia*) the approach of Theodoric the Great to Constantinople in 487. Perhaps a pavement transposed, scarcely mosaic, a composition in incised lines, extremely graphic and absurd.

CENTURY VI.

S. Apollinare in Classe, 567.
S. Apollinare Nuova (nella Citta), 570.
Baptistry, afterwards Sta. Maria in Cosmedin.
S. Michael, 545. Christ with jewelled Cross.
S. Vitale. Historical, symbolic, and naturalistic subjects in mosaic.

SS. Nereus and Achilles, 796. Transfiguration, and Madonna addressed by Angels.

S. Susanna, 797. Leo III. Christ and Apostles; monogram of Leo. Triclinium of S. John Lateran. Saints and Charlemagne.

CENTURY IX.

S. Maria in Navicella, or Dominica. The Blessed Virgin enthroned, with the Infant as a diminutive Man. He is seated also over the arch of triumph.

S. Praxedes or S. Prassede. Seventh chapter of Apocalypse: the Holy City, Jordan, the Twenty-four Elders, &c. &c. (818, by Paschal I., who also set up the great mosaic of SS. Cosmas and Damianus, of our Lord standing on the clouds.)

Church of S. Cecilia, also by Pope Paschal.

Church of S. Mark (founded by Pope Mark I., 337). Mosaics added by Hadrian I.; then, on entire rebuilding of the church, renewed by Gregory IV., 828. Jordan, Jerusalem, and Bethlehem, &c. &c.

S. Maria Novæ Urbis, 858. Rebuilt by Leo IV. Mosaics by Nicholas I., 858—68. The Virgin enthroned, as in S. Maria in Dominica.

A few notices of the most interesting of these mosaics seem advisable here. I mention those more particularly which are accessible in photograph or in facsimile, as those of S. Constantine and S. Vitale. Everybody who is within reach of South Kensington ought to go to the great hall there, and see what these ancient mosaics really were like; as the photograph, though excellent for facts and subjects, gives no notion of colour, and prejudices the mind, in spite of itself, against the beauty of the decoration.

The most important fourth- and fifth-century pictures are the Vintage subjects in S. Constantia's at Rome, the historical mosaics of S. Maria Maggiore, and the Ravennese decorations of the Chapel of Galla Placidia. The two first will be found in photograph in Mr. J. H. Parker's volume on Roman Mosaics, and in Ciampini's *Vetera Monumenta*; the third is figured by Ciampini, and in many modern histories of painting, as Kugler's, Crowe and Cavalcaselle's, &c. &c. It is in fact the latest and most important work in colour which classical art produced before its traditionary skill had departed. The works of Justinian's age, a century later, though grand in colour and devout in spirit, show little regard for, or indeed sense of, form or composition.

The vine-mosaics may have ornamented the supposed fourth-century temple of Bacchus, whose materials, at least, were used by Constantine's architects when he built S. Constantia's

as the sepulchral chapel of his daughter, and for a baptistery to the Church of St. Agnes. Ciampini and others think that he purified and consecrated the heathen building as it stood ; but it is of course impossible to determine how far it was altered, and how far destroyed and rebuilt. These pictures are to be seen in facsimile at South Kensington ; and in their time and place, in the original church, they illustrate a well-known habit of the early decorators, who gladly adopted gentile work and patterns wherever they could. In the days of persecution they had naturally wished to attract as little notice as possible ; and it seems probable that as congregations so often met in large halls, like that in the house of Pudens, they had grown used to gentile ornamentation, which was often harmless as well as graceful. Scenes of country life, especially of shepherds and vintagers, seem to have been very popular in Rome, and to have appeared over and over again in various houses, as we are now subject to frequent visitation of the same favourite wall-paper patterns.

These subjects soon acquired a Christian meaning, and as they could be held symbolic of the Lord's own parables of Himself, Christians soon began formally to adopt them. It cannot be surprising, then, that the Good Shepherd and the Vine were the earliest of the symbolic paintings of the Catacombs. For what reason it is difficult to explain, but probably from the general turn of men's thoughts to the Apocalypse, after the taking of Rome by Alaric in 410, both these subjects lost their pre-eminence before the great age of Christian mosaic.

It is probable that the disappearance of the Good Shepherd, the substitution, either of the imaged portrait of the Lord, or of His Form seen mystically, and the prevailing cultus and representation of the Blessed Virgin and the Saints, were all symptoms traceable to the same cause ; to deep and wide distress of nations and perplexity, and to mingled desire and dread of His coming to Judgment. Men saw such wickedness and misery around them that they could only think of punishment, and yet more misery for the greater part of the world ; and the days were indeed come, when, because iniquity abounded, the love of many had waxed cold.

They desired to see a sign of the Son of Man ; and, not seeing one, they made to themselves *signa*, statues, or ikons, or visible images of Him, and then of His Saints. For as the thought of His Presence among them to rule and save receded, as in fact He seemed more distant from them, they began to seek for intercession with the Intercessor, and for aid and love more near than His. The steps made in the cultus of the Blessed Virgin, as Chief of Saints, and of all the host of heaven with her, are pretty well indicated by the mosaics. She had all along appeared in Adorations of Magi, and as Mother of the Lord. In the seventh century, in S. Agnese at Rome, the Patron Saint appears in the Lord's place of honour ; in the eighth, in S. Nereus and Achilles, the Madonna is addressed by angels ; in the ninth, in S. Maria in Navicella, she is enthroned ; in S. Maria in Trastevere she sits by the Lord in Judgment.¹ But long before that, and almost throughout the great assimilation of Pagan races into Christianity in the fifth and sixth centuries, there had grown up a polytheistic worship of saints or martyrs gone before, which greatly resembled the adoration of Greek heroes or Etruscan ancestors. The distinction of *latria* as due to God only, *dulia* and *hyperdulia* to created objects of worship, was never understood by the people ; perhaps it was an afterthought of S. John Damascenus's, a formulated distinction made in self-defence against iconoclastic argument, and never intended for the people at all. It may avail in private, and most of us practically acknowledge it—all, at least, who maintain proper reverence for the Lord's Mother, and the whole communion of His saints. To desire earnestly to be one with the Church of Christ, and to share the benefit of all its body of prayer made on earth, and perhaps by those gone before, is right for all. But the result of the worship of Saints from the sixth century was absolute polytheism, and the use of images ended in fetishism.

It is Professor Westwood's opinion that a connection exists between Roman and Ravennese mosaic or English or Irish

¹ Mr. Parker is certainly right in considering the enthroned figure by the side of Our Lord, in S. Maria in Trastevere, a 'symbolism of His Spouse the Church ; as quotations from the Song of Solomon are in the book in His hand. (Cant. iv. 8, and ii. 6.)

illumination, because the early Northern or Celtic pilgrims learnt to enjoy the beauty of rich colour from the glowing interiors of the sixth-century churches, then in their first beauty. It is probably true. Such a lesson would be easily learned, because the pilgrims or missionaries would understand the power which graphic representation would add to their preaching.

All picture art is a means of expressing some idea by coloured, or carven, or outlined form ; and, primarily, the value of the production depends on the value of the idea. If a man has thought about a great and noble thing, and conveyed his thought, he has so far done more than if he told his mind about an ordinary thing, and *à fortiori* than if he told it of a base or evil thing. Now early periods of the great races have generally been artistic. The Lombards, Carlovingsians, Franks, and Normans are the chief modern examples ; the Egyptians and Assyrians are the ancients of pictorial record ; and the Greeks the central race of unequalled power and glory therein. Well, early periods are artistic because they put their hearts into art or representative expression, and paint or carve the things they love, or hope, or rejoice in, or are proud of—with national pride, or humanly recognised right to be proud. For it is not pride of wilful arrogance, in non-Christian races, to exult in that in which others exult with you. “Rome may bear the pride of him of whom herself is proud.” In the childhood of Art, she is like other well-bred and highly nurtured children, and she muses of great deeds—for them she thinks she was born ; to live and die in grand effort and toil and danger it may be, and to tell of the works of the mighty, and their hopes, and their thoughts of the world of spirits most of all—that is her work. Thus it is that the works of early painters are often, as Ruskin has said, the burning message of prophecy delivered by the stammering lips of infants ; and this involves all the greatness and dignity of early mosaic and illumination. And just in the same way did the wife of the Conqueror give her years to the Bayeux tapestry.¹ She had a great subject ;

¹ The Bayeux tapestry, and early miniature in general, when compared with the more correct work of modern times, opens a curious question about the

and her record of it is a historical document beyond all price. She probably knew as well as we do that her men were not anatomically correct, and her horses not very like the horses she herself saw and rode on. But she conveys an unprecedented and unexcelled amount of knowledge in detail, and her work is almost an extreme example of rude forms conveying important ideas.

Forms lose their rudeness and acquire beauty; and so begins the central artistic period of every nation. But there comes a time in later days when beautiful forms and their colours supplant the expressed ideas; when the workmanship is everything and the idea nothing. While great beauty remains, this is the condition of high Renaissance art. It is art for art's sake: it is not inventive, but educated; it has lost enthusiasm, but may flourish long in right and learned eclecticism. After a time it becomes commonplace and pedantic; and then its beauty dies away, because people cannot feel it any more. At all events, Renaissance work depends on technical excellence and pomp of knowledge, on learning, in fact, rather than on beauty; and on beauty rather than on meaning. Now mosaic seems to me to have flourished in ages and places where art, and learning about art, were alike decayed and sinking. It seems to have been done in great measure by conventual artists who had a great deal of time at their disposal. Its subjects, however, make it, to Christian people, of endless value and greatness. The great mosaics of the fifth and sixth centuries, which are the principal part of this subject, are not, I think, so much the last efforts of a decaying art, as the first of a religious revival. Take it how you will, the spirit of pictorial symbolism, on which all art depends, was, as a matter of fact, kept alive by these, and by Christian sculpture; and if it had not been so

comparative truth (*i.e.* value) of works of art. The archaic pictures are wrong in anatomy and form of men and horses, but they are often so graphic and racy as to convey more and truer ideas about the subject than the modern. Their defect of hand is excusable in an age which was art-schoolless rather than artless. Queen Matilda, like the miniaturists, may probably have considered her pictures as purely conventional hieroglyphics, not literal attempts at representation. Her knowledge of a horse probably equalled that of most modern art-writers.

preserved, it is impossible to say how it would have survived at all. I do not think there is any rival instance of regular barbarians of any race, Northern or Southern, who have seen Greek models of sculpture, felt their beauty and naturalness, and so proceeded, as Nicola Pisano did, to copy nature *as Greeks had worked from nature*. The Pisani and the other fathers of the great Renaissance were pupils of Byzantium, or else of the early conventual schools of Italy. Vasari says the former, but it does not matter which to our purpose. Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle's History tells us much on this point. There must, in any case, have been a great deal of Byzantine work done in Eastern Italy during the Exarchate, and by exiled Iconodulists. Nevertheless the Benedictine rule was one of steadfast labour as well as of prayer and discipline, and as all the other arts of life were preserved or revived in its convents, in Italy and beyond the Alps, they may have handed down to the Pisan and Florentine Revival a fair modicum of Italo-Roman art, without applying for Greek instruction at Byzantium. Of course that Italo-Roman art was derived from Athens at its root, and Nicola Pisano's greatest work was to go back to Attic models for himself and his pupils.

Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle say (chap. ii. vol. i.) that the Greek school in Rome (founded from Ravenna) came to an end with the seventh century, or early in the eighth, and that Roman art trod the path of decline independent in its weakness. However, they agree that the Greek school prevailed at Milan in the ninth century, and it must have done so at Venice from the beginning. Their conclusive admission is (p. 63, chap. ii. vol. i.) that Desiderius, abbot of Monte Casino, sent in 870 for Greek mosaicists to adorn his apse and altar, and ordered his novices to learn the art of in-laying from them. So says Leo of Ostia in Muratori, *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores* (vol. iv. p. 442); and he adds the assertion, a good deal controverted, that mosaic had been lost to Italy (scarcely to Rome) since the Lombard invasion in 568. Again, the Greek works in Sicily are most important, and they were certainly imitated at Salerno and elsewhere on the main Peninsula, in the twelfth century.

As for their value as monuments, these works are landmarks of time, and by them we judge of the men who did them; they are originals, and have the value of original MSS., whatever amount of technical skill or beauty they may possess over and above. Nothing remains of races or conquerors except these fragments of their attempts to reconstruct, and to make something after having destroyed so very much. Roman bricks are like the bricks of Jack Cade's chimney, surviving and authentic witnesses of facts; they bring home the personal reality of veritable event, and contend against that frame of mind in the student of contradictory narratives, which Professor Arnold expresses by calling history a Mississippi of falsehood. It is not only the record of Holy Scripture men disbelieve—their minds are not equal to realising the truth of any history at all. It is, in fact, a natural reaction from determinedly impertinent inquiry into things too hard for us, when the intellect is wearied out with vain effort, and can accept no reality except in the daily papers. The best restorative and antidote is some knowledge of the actual and original works which are left us from master-workmen dead and gone. The hand of Phidias is phosphate of lime somewhere; but that hand was busy on the Theseus 2,300 years ago, and Theseus may be seen in the British Museum; where I never heard of a student of history visiting him.

The period of the Decline and Fall is certainly not a good one for educational study of history; it is comparatively painful and uninteresting, being about decline and fall. Still the continuity of history must be preserved; and we, who are Goths, or Teutons, or Northmen, must learn how much civilisation we owe to the Roman Empire and the schools of Athens, unless we mean to resign that culture. The Dark Ages must be bridged over somehow; they cannot be considered as a Deluge beyond which nothing is known, and after which the human tale has to be taken up afresh, without practical connection with the past. Historic connection is strong between the Roman and Gothic systems, and these documents are its evidences. It is complained, and not unreasonably, that we have no notion of the virtues or the value of Greece, and do

not know how much we are indebted to her. This is in great measure true ; though it is not quite true of those who have been brought up in the old fashion, on Greek or Roman scholarship, philosophy, and poetry. The fact is, a great many of us of the older style knew our Greek texts very well ; that is to say, those of the authors best worth knowing. In this sense many country gentlemen might be named, who are quite as good Hellenists as the modern supporters of Greek morals against Christian. But scholarship is not all, nor even philosophy, nor yet the dry bones and chronicle of history. People will not give enough attention to history to believe it, unless they see that it has something to do with them. We do not think the moral systems of Greece and Rome so good as the system we have ; but it is worth anything to us to know that the law of right and wrong was confessed by the heathen according to his lights. And the fruit of his imagination and invention, the very stones he laid, the actual marble and colours he carved and blazoned, are our models to this day, and have much to do with our life. The Roman law directed all our own middle ages ; and the Roman law of the Ten Tables, "*fons omnis publici privatique juris*" (Liv. iii. 34), certainly deferred to, and was based on, Greek institutions.

The fact is that, in the Arts more particularly, our popular information is in that stage which has mastered the leading distinctions, and not yet understood the great connections of the classical and Gothic systems—so called under protest, and with reference to the distinctions in our second chapter. People are so afraid of being caught in some confusion between Greek and Gothic, that they cannot realise the truths that Goths learnt much from Greeks, and that both Greek and Goth were taught everything of God, through His Book of Visible Nature. A pediment is classical, and a gable is Gothic, and we are so proud of knowing it that we quite forget that a pediment is a low gable after all. The same principles adapted to different needs and ends govern all good Art to all time ; a natural leaf-curve is good, and a circular one not so good, in Athens, Rome, and Rouen. In the Arts, as in all things, confusion of terminology is the

difficulty ; there are too many names for the same thing ; it really is the pest of too many cooks, or books, or students of a subject, to have them all inventing terms for their different views.

There was a new spirit in Christian mosaic from the end of the fourth century. It was essentially religious ; and the Church was becoming in those days every year more "religious" in the ascetic or conventual sense. The right direction and impulses were newly given to art ; but the races and the times were old and in decay. Consequently we meet in the work of those times with such characteristics we might have expected. It is very different from old Greek art ; still more so from that of the late or irreligious Renaissance ; very different again from miniature work or illumination, which took its place afterwards in the monastic studios ; but having certain points in common with the first and last of these. Like both old Greek art and Christian miniature, it represented that which the artist worshipped, venerated, and loved, what he hoped for, or thought of, in a spiritual world : like both of these, it was done not without spiritual motive, and for the motive's sake, not primarily for the art's sake. Yet unlike both of these, the great complication and cost of the work, and the immense amount of rather mechanical labour it required, prevented much improvement in beauty, and forbade mosaics ever becoming either a very high or widely popular form of art like sculpture or drawing. For these both rise with the might of the workman, and willingly take lower and easier forms to suit the tastes or powers of all true students. Probably there was no mosaic in the high days of Pheidias and Pericles ; certainly none in Greece, excepting, perhaps, ordinary chequers and variations of colour in pavements (we know, of course, from the Book of Esther, that work of this kind existed in Persia) ; but it seems to have been kept almost entirely in Asia till the days of the Ptolemies, and Attalus of Pergamos ; and it may therefore be considered as a fashionable style of ornament adopted from Syria and the East, and well suited to the well-taught and nimble-fingered workmen of Asiatic Greece, Ionian or Dorian. They seem to have felt it as unfit for lofty or ideal subjects, and to have treated it (as

it has at all times and to the present day been treated, except in religious work) as a means of rudely ingenious imitation; half deceptive, half conventional, as in the "Unswep Hall" of Attalus's palace, where the tessellated pavement represented the relics and mess of an unremoved banquet. The most pleasing example of this kind which is now in existence is also one of the best-known works of art in the world. It is the "Capitoline" or Pliny's "Doves," so called because it was a standard work in his days, and is duly mentioned by him. (*Nat. Hist.* xxxvi. 60.) It is the earliest of Mr. Parker's examples of classical mosaic in photograph; and any one who will examine it in his book with a good magnifier will see with what breadth and skill the irregularly shaped pieces of marble are composed. Correctly speaking, we suppose it would be called *opus sectile*, the fragments being cut to form a designed shape, and not merely square tessellæ. But it is a really beautiful work, superior even to the Tigress of S. Antonio Abbate. Dr. Northcote tells a capital story about it, to the effect that some zealous Anglican thought it was a Christian work, symbolical of Lay participation in the Eucharistic Cup. This certainly was as great a mistake as is generally made by the most enthusiastic student; and is rather a caution against the habit, so prevalent just now in religious, artistic, and semi-religious subjects, of writing earnestly, perhaps polemically, on a matter before you have read enough about it. But there can be no doubt that the doves and chalice on Ravenese, and afterwards on early Venetian sarcophagi, do occur times out of number: that the doves symbolize the faithful generally, or that the chalice is the chalice of Holy Communion.

Most of us will see then that (1) mosaic is incapable of being made an exponent of very high art, though it may express the loftiest ideas. It is highly symbolic, having little power of imitating nature; and it gives no notion, either, of the *hand* of a great master; though it may follow his design in a rough way, and his genius may adapt his design to the method of execution; as a certain conventionality is given to some of the correctly drawn and most beautiful figures in

Burne Jones's windows.¹ (2) Great part of the archaism and stiffness of Byzantine art was impressed on it, as a characteristic, by the practice of mosaic; and the same influence was continued into Gothic. (3) Mosaic has certain relations in its decorative function, with the use of painted windows—which have been considered. (4) Both stained glass and mosaic have special relations also with miniature or illumination. (5) As to subject, the doctrinal expression of a succession of dated mosaics in churches built or restored in successive centuries is an important adjunct to history. This is obviously so in the first instance, because early in the eighth century the Iconoclastic movement begins, and the icons or forms, painted, carved, or inlaid, are seen to have had lamentable effect on popular belief and practice. Then, as we go back from that time to earlier days, better or not so bad, we shall see that the mosaic paintings represent popular teaching by clergy or monks, more particularly in its development and corollaries; showing not exactly the forms of words in which they expounded and expanded their ancient creed, but how they expected the people to take them. It indicates that curious and distressing want of safeguard or protest against idolatry in popular teaching which left its way open; and made it a natural thing, to a people already accustomed, by inveterate association, to a whole pantheon of inferior deities. And it seems to point out that a clergy and ministry taken from the people, and appealing to the people, will find themselves grievously tempted to fall in with popular tendency, and even to adopt popular error. Finally it will show us that popular error or even propensity, once endorsed with the authority and

¹ The skilful use of successive laminæ of coloured glass in some of these works, as in the Judgment Window at Easthampstead (Bracknell, Berks), is an important addition to the technique of stained-glass, giving it much of the value of transparent painting. Sir Joshua Reynolds said, in reference to the windows of the Virtues in New College, Oxford, which he designed, that he had had great hopes of the effect of light through his colour, and not reflected only from canvas. These, he says, were utterly and completely disappointed. But the use of fine transparent glass in successive laminæ, answering to the touches or coatings of a water-colour painting, might have enabled him, and has enabled Mr. Burne Jones, to produce some new and very striking results, as it were, in transparent mosaic. See also his works in Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford.

proclaimed with the voice of a Church, is almost irrevocable, and without remedy ; save by one of those great interpositions which mark periods of human history with the Divine brand of grievous affliction. I have nothing to say against popular preaching ; but every preacher who does his duty will sometimes find it necessary to oppose himself to popular religious feeling ; and that, in these days, nobody dares do.

A Scriptorium of ancient days may often have been—must generally have been—rather a happy kind of place, where shaven and silent copyists worked away, in well-founded hope that they were labouring to the glory of God ; and enjoyed the purest of earthly pleasures, as well as the daintiest ; which I take to be the manipulation of rich, bright colours with clear, temperate eyes. No such place exists now in the Western Church, strictly speaking ; though at Russia and at Mount Athos, and elsewhere in the East, the old system is in full force. It is worth referring to *Institutions Liturgiques* to read the learned and excellent Dom Guéranger's racy lamentations over the degeneracy or disappearance of calligraphy and illumination from the Gallican Church ; and I do not see that he looks to Germany or Italy to supply the deficiency.

In Curzon's *Monasteries* there is a delightful account of the Abyssinian scribe, as black as a crow, clad in raiment of antelope washleather, and anointed with oil of castor, not of gladness. There is also a most right and sensible reminder as to the primitive zeal and labour, and in some degree the learning, of these wild ascetics, some of whom, I remember, were in Jerusalem in 1859. I think that the Rev. H. F. Tozer has published *A Visit to Mount Athos*, or that an account of the monasteries there (and I know of no other except in Curzon) will be found in his *Travels*.¹ The forthcoming Armenian Travels will certainly be of great interest in this connection. But the mosaic studio of a convent must have required a certain amount of conversation, and involved a certain amount of workmanlike disorder. There must have been a number of men employed on one design, and they must have had leave to talk about it ; there must have been a lively clatter of marble slabs and glass tessellæ : the master

¹ Murray, 1870.

of the work would have his directions to give, and have to expound about it to abbot and convent. In short, the picture would have the advantage of patrons deeply interested in it, who chose its subject, and probably directed or fully canvassed its execution with the actual craftsmen, in many cases their own brethren. And if they retained little remembrance of classical rule, and thought classical inspiration unholy, they at least brought the colour-inspiration of the East to bear on their work as no architect or painter had yet dared to do. The Attic workman had coloured his temples, tinted his statues, and gilded their helmets and bridle-bits; but in his clear day-lights he had artfully kept down his hues to half-tints, consonant with the warm or pure glow of gold and Parian marble. The children of the desert, whether born or by adoption, made their fanes dark for refuge from the sun they loved and feared. But being screened in grateful gloom, they made themselves therein another cool sunshine, of many colours, as clear and deep as the Eastern sky at sunset; all pure and intense hue, like the afterglow. Greek colour had been pure and bright in gold and grey, and decorative half-tints. It was colour of present strength and joy, fit for the background of grand sculpture, and the imagined presence of gods and heroes. But this Neo-Greek colouring, the work of distressed Christians, whose joy was in hope only, and whose strength was in weakness, is intense and pure, and gorgeous and profound. They were forbidden, or they knew not or cared not how, to show forth beauty of form; but their colour was symbolic of Heaven to them, the one permitted delight of the ascetic, the sign of his hope of the Eternal city, and her gates of gems and battlements of pure gold. The splendour of the Neo-Greek apses is barbaric to those whose notions of beauty are limited by artistic crétottes. But to those for whom they were built, they seemed indeed to verify the words which have comforted the suffering Church through all time: "O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and thy gates with carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones. . . . No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in

judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord ; and their righteousness is of Me, saith the Lord."

* * * * *

These words were written several weeks ago, and I have since seen an illustration of them, so delightful in its character, and so entirely unexpected,¹ that I have asked leave to mention it here. Several years have passed since I ventured to ask, in *Art-teaching of the Primitive Church*, if any ladies could be found who would employ themselves in Church mosaic-work, instead of, or as an alternative, to embroidery ; chiefly because men can understand the one, and cannot understand the other. The suggestion was repeated elsewhere, and, I need hardly say, produced no result whatever. Moreover, all the unemployed ladies of high artistic feeling with whom I talked to personally about it produced the most excellent reasons for making no attempt of the kind. Happily the same idea has occurred to others, and been executed by other hands, under the influence of the Dean and Chapter of S. Paul's and Colonel Du Cane. Those who visit S. Paul's Cathedral may not all be aware of the rapidly advancing restoration of the crypts or subterranean churches below its pavements. The effect of their massive piers and low-browed arches, and the endless perspectives of their dim aisles, is not only in itself most powerful, but full of association, carrying one's mind back not only to ancient northern vaultings of Scandinavian origin, but to the catacombs themselves. But it is more to the immediate purpose that the whole choir of the long crypt is now floored with mosaic, made by women imprisoned for various terms and offences, under Colonel Du Cane's inspection. The work is not "sectile," but all in small cubes on white ground, and would answer to the Roman first century "lithostrotum," called "vermiculatum" or "albarium." It is in black, red, and white : and its beautiful pattern reminds one of the mosaics of Hadrian's Villa. It is due to the classical taste and ripe learning of Mr. Penrose. It involves no special symbolism : the thing itself has its own train of imagery. The long

¹ This addition is retained as first written—R. S. J. T.

and careful manipulations required in arranging the tesserae are said to give much interest and relief to the women employed; and their chief directress and superintendent, the soul of the whole work, is the remembered Constance Kent. The work of many troubled spirits, and hands once deeply stained, is the flooring of God's sanctuary. These are not pillars or polished corner-stones; that which they have, they have given, and their work will follow them for centuries; and age after age of secret prayer, below the foundations of London, and, deeper than its unrest and turmoil, will re-echo their penitence in the Ear that hears. "*Adhæsit pavimento*," says the Vulgate. "My soul cleaveth to the dust: O quicken Thou me according to Thy word." If there be any symbolism more profound than that of a house of prayer thus paven with penitence I know not what or where it is.

CHAPTER IX.

CHRISTIAN SCULPTURE.

IN finishing with mosaic we have done with the least artistic of arts, in the modern sense of the adjective. The great examples of tessellation in no sense comply with the rules of modern taste. Their subjects are religious, and they at once assert an importance of their own which is beyond technique or handling. They refuse, in fact, to be judged of as purely intellectual works, or by the artistic standard only, and appeal to the spiritual judgment. All work does so which appeals to lofty or spiritual thought.¹ Mosaic is unpopular with many, as specially religious work ; it is also objected to, with less reason, as belonging to a special Church. There is a suspicion of Popery about it, which has been considered, and, I trust, fairly disposed of. It has been shown how far its use and progress coincided in time with advancing iconodulism and virtual polytheism in the Church of Christ, but had no necessary connexion with them. But it is further exposed to a not unnatural kind of dislike from the ascetic or penitent character with which it is associated. I mentioned at the end of the last chapter a singularly touching and impressive instance of its modern use, as work of penitent persons, or persons trying to be penitents ; and its original cast and import will be felt so to the end of time. In speaking of it one must go out of the province of technical art, and descend so far to personalities as to ask ourselves if we

¹ It is curious that Sophocles' expression, *ἀνεμος φρόνημα*, should so exactly correspond to the words, "spiritual thought."

have any real wish to adopt, or sympathise, with the "art" of penitent persons. Conviction of sin is not an æsthetic feeling, nor are the results of sin, nor distresses of nations, nor the evil work that is done under the sun. And those who are grieved because of sin and evil must have some feeling for those who sorrowed of old, and left us these records. The prevailing, but self-destructive tendency of art, or artistic people, at the present day, is to shut out all this too much. We try to hide from sights and sounds of evil, as it were, behind our curtained windows and patterned walls, and find that we sit alone with tameness and smooth monotony. We may give up deep feelings, and think no more of great deeds; but the pettier passions will come instead of the loftier. They are "intense," and nerve-breaking, and omnipresent. They spoil black and gold furniture, olive green curtains, blue and white china, and all the pedantic perfection of what we call our artistic surroundings. If we will not face the world and take our part of what is going with the rest, we shall have to face troubles by ourselves; and those chiefly of our own making.

However, mosaic is solemn, and Byzantine, and penitential. It is not only closely limited on the technical side, excluding many delicacies and graces of art, but it appeals in all its highest works to things far beyond technique; and at present its appeal is very imperfectly attended to, either on the religious or irreligious side of literature and taste. One great work in mosaic, already alluded to, may be described as we quit the subject, for in fact it leads us into our present chapter. Thus far we have confined ourselves to the superficial ornament of the walls of the Basilica, or architecturally and properly built Church; we are going on to consider its sculpture. And we shall find, nobody disputes the fact, that all the fourth century or earliest Christian sculpture is sepulchral, not religious only. It is not only the decoration of a church, but of special parts of the church, and a special division of her symbolic system. But let the great mosaic of SS. Cosmus and Damianus, set up by Paschal I. in the ninth century, about the beginning of the darkest and most hopeless period of Italian or human history, lead us

back to its real origin in Attic sculpture ; for as sure as the child is father of the man (and *vice versa*, as I have generally been accustomed to consider it), so surely Pheidias was the ancestor of the mosaicist, and as the Olympian Jupiter was the greatest work of the Greek mind in its untaught manhood and glory, so the mosaic shows what the Faith could do for the utter collapse of the Neo-Greek intellect.

The idea of God's being acceptably worshipped, and so coming to His Temple, and filling it with His glory, the great light of His presence, and the thick darkness that is under His feet, is not Greek only, or Christian, or Semitic, but human. It may be the highest idea of His actual self-manifestation to His people, if they are spiritual-minded enough to form it in the right way, or it may fall to a degrading Fetishism, if they are degraded enough. That God is in His Temple in Real Presence is on all hands granted, and in many hearts at least is felt with awe and hope. That He is to be brought there in Visible Presence, is, in fact, the root of all human idolatry. Men have so longed to believe that they have Him before their bodily eyes, the evil as well as good have so eagerly sought for a sign, that they have made signs, *signa*, images of Him continually ; and the records of that unhappy faculty of theirs are written all through in history in characters somewhat of the reddest.

There are two passages of Scripture in particular, 'one of the highest flight of inspired song, the other of actual prophetic Vision of the Almighty, which seem to express that which was the real purpose and thought of Pheidias and the monk-mosaicist alike. They are Isaiah vi. 1 and Psalm xviii. 9-11. Both imply a great and overpowering Presence, far more than mortal, high, and lifted up ; towering before the shrinking seer ; borne on living things bright and terrible ; filling the temple with glory, and clouds, and thick darkness. The Hebrew or Christian Greek dwelt more on the awfulness and mystery of the Infinite and Incomprehensible Being Whom he felt to be thus made known to him. The ethnic had had no open vision or Revelation of the Lord ; but he had learnt to conceive of Him, from the beauty and the awe which might exist in man, who was made in His

image. And Pheidias did attain to an expression and impression of sacred awe on all comers, on all at least who entered the Olympian Temple with any genuine purpose of worship. The Greek did not for a moment forget that the Agalma of Zeus at Olympia was an Agalma, or graven image of glory. He did not expect it to wink, or to shed tears, or to cure his complaints, or to knock him down with its sceptre. He never doubted that it was all the work of Pheidias of Athens. Yet it did impress him with the sense that there was a God, and that He was most great and awful and incomprehensible. Pheidias, I say, attained to awe. His Agalma did not literally reveal Zeus to Greeks, they were far too sharp to believe that; its perfection of execution and their own knowledge of technical beauty prevented their thinking so. But it made them humble themselves before an unknown Zeus—one far above and beyond the children of men; and so far the great image must have had a spiritual effect, and that a good one.¹ For, as Professor Zeller has made out quite convincingly,² there was not only a philosophical dogma, but a popular apprehension in the Greeks, of the Being and unity of a God in whom all higher attributes of all the great gods of Olympus were One. The Theion, the Divinity, was a common term in Greek conversation and argument. He was felt as a practical ruler, whom men seem really to have minded; and of this general sense of Deity the Agalma was an interpretation. It was in its time the chief of all ethnic or human symbols; the highest known human "assertion of the Superhuman."

Whatever be said of the Hebrew-Christian idea of actual

¹ Those who wish to understand how much sincere monotheism underlaid mythology in the souls of the better heathen should read—first, S. Paul's discourse at Athens (Acts xiii.), and then Professor Zeller's *Pre-Socratic Philosophy*, and his article on "Greek Monotheism," *Contemporary Review*, vol. iii. Mr. Watkiss Lloyd has struck an important keynote to the same purpose in the *Age of Pericles*, vol. i. p. 336:—"This loftier ideal (of Zeus as God and the All-Creator, just and merciful) is from time to time confused with the agencies of a plurality of gods, or with such a defective personality as the poetic Zeus. But this inconsistency did not hinder that sense of the Unity of providential control of the worlds of matter, life and conscience, which is the essence of Monotheism, and towards which the poetry of Æschylus still marks a decided advance."

² Mr. Watkiss Lloyd, Mr. Mahaffy, and notably Mr. Ruskin, all agree in this.

personal Revelation by God of Himself to the human spirit, it is evident that the Christ of the Mosaics and MSS. asserts nothing less, and appeals to something more, than the undefined feeling of awe of God. It is plainly connected with a definite creed. It is a very curious, and not idle or unprofitable, exercise of fancy to think what Pheidias would have thought of one of the colossal Christs of the Byzantine apses, supposing him aware that they were done by Greeks, whose little knowledge of art had come down from him and Attica, and who had quite forgotten its source. To judge by Demosthenes and Plato, Greeks of Athens spoke—either when they were thoroughly excited in connected speech or thoroughly at ease in conversation—in a manner very like well-bred and keen Englishmen. I dare say the shade of Pheidias (if he can be imagined to have returned to earth in the ninth century, and for a time forgotten all he had learned in the interval, about his own Zeus and the God of the Christians) would have ruminated much to the following purpose, after picking his way, a living Athenian once more, through the shattered Forum of Paschal I.'s Rome, into the Church of SS. Cosmo and Damian in the ninth century:¹

“They knew how to build here once, at all events, and somebody has known pretty well how to pull down since. Capital masonry and fine brickwork. We never cared for those round arches in my day, when we could quarry the long blocks from Pentelicus close by, and lengthen out our bright entablatures parallel against the horizon. Not but that arches make as good perspectives as my columns on the Acropolis. Ah, well! it never was that like here. How big, and powerful, and crushing, and overloading this great place must have been; a good deal of what we called *Banausia*.”

All this time the Shade has been blinded by the transition from the glare of the Forum as he enters the dark, quiet church on the site of the Temple of Remus. He now looks straight forward, remembering how his Athene always faced him, grand and benign, as he entered the Parthenon, towering above all and seeming to fill her Temple, with thunderous purple robes

¹ A humble imitation of the Proem to *Romola* may be excused here.

over gold and ivory, bearing Ægis and Gorgon, "nor wanting in her grasp what seemed both spear and shield." He is met by the great spare form of the Lord coming with clouds, walking as on the floor of Heaven, and having under His feet the darkness of the sky. Its grave eyes appeal to Him after their fashion, and He feels it.

"Well, this may be barbarism, but there is no doubt it means a good deal. *Σεμνότης*—yes, it amounts to that. Who is it who looks great and sad, standing in all that blaze of colour—different from my half-tints, and yet so rich and deep? Something our old Æschylus might have fancied in that form. These are all praying before Him: has anything fresh been heard of Zeus since my time? He was bad to find then; they said I revealed him at Olympia; and Polycletus wrought out Here, and Myron pleased the people—our old Demus. There seem to be many here like them—and yet not like. What a worn-out, distressed-looking set they are! They are praying; and this temple of theirs is built of ruin and on ruin; they seem to be in worse trouble than we, when our people got back home after Plataea. We nearly came off here to Hesperia; I remember hearing it all when I was a boy. It's clear they all know about colour, and effect under dim light—more Asian or Persian taste than ours. But that Form stands as Athene used to stand: they have wanted to do what I did—and done it, in their way. This is a sad temple of a sad time, and their gods seem mournful too. Perhaps that is better than Homer's and Hesiod's jovial Olympians. Let me go and talk with the Hierophant yonder, when the rite's over."

We cannot tell what Pheidias would have thought of such religious teaching as he could have got in Rome in the ninth century; but he would have seen that it was the one sole element of order, peace, power, or hope which existed there or in the Roman world. The vast Roman collections of second-rate sculpture which may still have been left would not have given him much satisfaction in the way of art, especially when he came to know that they were all a matter of museums and palatial ornaments, mere curiosities of past war and plunder, which men were far more likely to build into walls,

or heave over battlements, than to use as models for imitative schools. Had he gone northwards into Lombardy, he would have seen much strange sculpture, done by a set of wild hyperborean throat-cutting Keltæ, who would indeed refuse to be called Keltæ, or by any other name he knew; but who were adopting the worship and service of the sad God of many-coloured apses, and somehow submitted to the teaching of their own slaves, of priests and monks, who got these great Eikons done—images, by no means agalmata. The priests of Athens had not been his friends, or the noble Pericles's—Eumolpidæ and Ceryces, and the conventional rites and superstitions had had a great deal to do with his imprisonment and death. They were impostors, in fact; but these men worked and taught. He would learn too for a while, among the fair marble Apennines and the Tyrian-blue bays of Spezia and Pisa, so like the Attic mountains and the seas he once had known.

Leaving the representative of Greek art to wait for his best pupil, Niccola Pisano, we go back to the latest Roman sculpture which bears any traces of his traditions. It is all Christian; for during the second century all sculpture degenerates fast, and by the end of it there are no more ethnic or pagan works to refer to except the later carvings on the Arch of Constantine. These show such utter and distressing collapse of heathen skill and spirit that we find we have a right to point to many fourth-century Christian works as indicating a degree of Renaissance or fresh effort in sculpture; stimulated by a new faith, with new subjects for the artist, and a certain earnestness of purpose, and cheerfulness of distant hope in the supporters of the art. And here I should like to make my late lamented friend, Mr. C. J. Hemans, speak for me, in one of the best paragraphs of his book on the Monuments of Ancient Rome. This work begins with some excellent remarks on the decadence of sculpture in Rome. It is necessary for us to understand, and to be able to express to others, speaking as Christian people, that in fact the decadence of the heathen arts had nothing to do with the Christian faith, but had been determined long before the Christian era; and was caused not by a new creed of

spiritual truth, but by the total loss of all spirit or truth from mythological religion. And here we may appeal to Mr. Hemans's *Historical and Monumental Rome*, p. 318 (1874):

"When the light of the setting sun, blent with the mellowing touches of time, gives an almost golden tint to the Arch of Constantine, as it rises in marble relief against the background of ilex and cypress-trees on the Coelian Hill, we may dwell with interest, in the pleasant evening hours, on the contrasted characteristics of Roman art at its zenith and in its deep decline, alike presented before us on the storied surface of that monument. The highest excellence of Roman sculpture is exemplified in the *relievi* and colossal statues of which the now lost Arch of Trajan was despoiled to adorn this later trophy of imperial victories, while the period of decline, almost to a level with barbarism, is represented by the bas-reliefs prepared in honour of the first Christian emperor, and that too, we would add, before the transference of his seat of power to Constantinople, when art may have fallen with swifter degradation within the forsaken Mistress of the World."

Now this passage is not only beautiful, but very useful indeed to a student of history, because it specifies the period which begins with Trajan, and ends with the Antonines, as the last period of Roman art undecayed. The beginning of the end of imperial arts, arms, and all else, may be fixed soon after the death of the first Antonine in 161 A.D. Happily a fine work of that date remains in the Vatican Gardens, the horsemen at the base of the Column of Antoninus.¹ After Constantine there is simply no more secular or pagan sculpture, except in the form of the consular ivory tablets or diptychs. We cannot go off to these at present, though there will be something to be said about them in due time. We now want one more quotation and reference to fix the dates and course of Roman decadence in sculpture, and then we must go back to see why heathen or ethnic Rome, which did so much on the constructive or engineering side of art, never cared for or got on in sculpture as Greeks, or indeed Etrurians,

¹ See Parker's *Photographs*, No. 328; and compare those on the porphyry tomb the Empress Helena, *ibid.* 209, which date about A.D. 330.

did. The fact is, the decay of the arts and the culture of the ancient world is always being charged by implication on the Christian faith ; and definitely religious opinions and practice are held inconsistent with pursuit of perfect art. And it seems to be necessary to repeat, or say a little more here, of how Roman arts fell to pieces in heathen hands ; and show that it is historically untrue that Christianity did what the corruption first of heathenism and then of paganism had virtually done centuries before. Men may in time learn to think that the modern pursuit of the arts is neither sinful nor infidel in man or woman ; and they may see that the Church never objects to anything till it is sinful ; but that finding the Romano-Greek arts involved with sin, she had to begin art with a feeble or rough technique, and an archaic treatment of her own.

Now for our other quotation, which illustrates in Seroux d'Agincourt's quick-flashing French way the consequences of the vast personal influence of the emperors on all public works, architecture and sculpture in particular.¹ "Sculpture was grand and noble under Augustus" (who had Vipsanius Agrippa, one of the stoutest and best of soldiers, workers, and administrators, to keep good Roman order in all things, *testudine et facie*, as he would have said) ; "it was licentious under Tiberius ; coarsely obsequious under Caracalla, who caused his own infamous head to be placed on the five Greek statues ; and extravagant under Nero, who gilded the famous *chef-d'œuvre* of Lysippus." Caracalla marks positive decline, but there had been a revival under Trajan and Hadrian, in decorative art as well as architecture ; and the great dissolution begins with the calamities of Aurelius's reign. This points out that it was fatal to sculpture to be so dependent on the will of the Emperor of the time. In Athens the Arts had been employed in the worship of Athens and the Unknown God. In Rome they were used in the service (a service extending to actual worship) of the Emperor, or centre of the organized forces of the Empire. And when that ruler was changed so often, and might be a good or bad

¹ Quoted by Professor Westwood, *Early Christian Sculptures*, Appendix to Parker's *Archæology of Ancient Rome*.

soldier, a dirty voluptuary, or a furious savage, the arts had not much chance. Any one who will read the first chapters of Mr. Hodgkin's *Italy and her Invaders* will not only employ his time most profitably, but find much which confirms the scattered historical statements of this book. The decline of the Arts cannot surprise any one who has formed an idea of the general disintegration of Roman society ; but their chief patron was often the centre of ruinous action.

Sculpture as we have to consider it—that is to say, the Christian Schools and works of the Glyptic art—may be said to be either Secular or Religious ; and the Religious side of this division branches again into Ecclesiastical and Sepulchral. As the Early Church neither possessed nor desired any secular sculpture, but utterly rejected the whole thing, and with excellent reasons, there is nothing to be said about it here. The arts of painting and mosaic took precedence of sculpture, because they excited far less of the old Hebrew Christian feeling against images. Pictures probably seemed then, as they have since appeared to the Greek Church throughout Russia and the East, to be similitudes, but not idols ; not solid human forms projecting in personal self-assertion, and challenging a right to high place in the temples of God. At all events, what we call statues or isolated marble figures can hardly be thought to have existed in Christian churches before the time of Constantine—and only a very few remain, or are on record as existing anywhere. It is difficult to understand what Eusebius really thought about the statue, or relief-image, of our Lord, which he had heard of as once existing at Cæsarea Philippi. It was thought to be executed, or ordered, by the Syrophœnician woman who had there been made whole of her plague ; and we shall find that this miracle is one of the most frequently repeated on Christian tombs at a later date. Eusebius mentions it with a certain indifference, as a local tradition, though he seems to remember to have seen it ; and he appears not to have cared to call much attention to the subject. He certainly cannot have thought of it as a real likeness or portrait of the Lord, or he would have been more anxious about it. We know from his letter to Constantia Augusta,

before 354 (she was daughter of Constantine and wife of Cæsar Gallus, and died in that year) that he was uneasy about the constantly renewed taste for images, carven and painted, in any place of worship.¹

Enough has been said here about the use of images in the Early Church from ethnic or heathen habit, and the energetic protests against images which are made by the earliest heads and Fathers of the Church. She did not introduce sacred pictures, or hold pictures as sacred; she found them everywhere; the Hebrew feeling of her first preachers, and the natural repulsion of her first gentile converts, inclined her to forbid them in churches as Tertullian desired, to do away with every vestige of graven image or representation, to the letter of the Second Commandment. This was attempted by the Council of Illiberis and Elvira in Grenada, in its thirty-sixth Act. Nevertheless the distinction between images for adoration and pictures for instruction seems to have been felt all along, and Paulinus of Nola's church-painting, at the end of the fourth and beginning of the fifth century, seems to have given no offence, because it was all intended to teach history by narrative painting, or doctrine by symbol and emblem, and offered no object of worship. The evil was popular; like all great evils, it was in the air; in the engrained iconolatry of the Græco-Roman world. The people were set on mischief; and Eusebius and Tertullian, and really, as far as honest intent went, John Damascenus after them, protested in vain like Aaron, and at last, like him, let the people have their will.

But the separate statue or standing image was more obnoxious than the picture or bas-relief for a special reason, that it was connected with imperial paganism, and the worship of the Divus Cæsar. It has been observed how great a misfortune it was for the Church of Constantinople and the Eastern world that Constantine permitted his own statues to be erected in his new Christian metropolis; and even

¹ See Bovin's *Annotations to Nicephorus Gregoras* xix. 3, *Scriptores Byzantini*, vol. xxxi. p. 1301, ed. Bonn. It was quoted by the Iconoclast side in the 2nd Council of Nice.

allowed a kind of worship with incense and lights before them. It was like leaving the root of idolatry, bound neither with brass nor iron, but alive and growing in the vineyard. But enough has been said to show how natural it is that so very few separate statues of primitive days should be left. The best short account of them is Professor Westwood's;¹ and his is almost the only work which gives proper attention and full description to the important diptychs and ivory carvings, which are the only existing specimens of secular Christian work.

The earliest known Christian statues, then, are the small and beautifully executed marble figures of the Good Shepherd in the Vatican and Lateran Museums. Their workmanship is so good, that they have been assigned to a much earlier period than the fourth century. Still, the typical or standard example of Christian sculpture (the far-famed Sarcophagus of Junius Bassus, which we shall have to describe), contains examples of like excellence, and its consular date is happily ascertained; as late as 359. After the Fish and the Vine, the Good Shepherd is probably the earliest emblematic figure of Our Lord: and it is possible that these figures may date from a time before the Peace of the Church, and have been the property of some richer Christian. In a church of such a date they would hardly have been permitted, but they may have adorned some oratory or catacomb. The use of private images dates of course from the domestic Lararium. It is well known that Alexander Severus had a kind of eclectic oratory, containing various images, for worship or meditation; and that among these was one of Our Lord.² Can it be possible that that Emperor knew that He was imaged (or even mentally symbolised) by His followers, as the Shepherd of Mankind? The Homeric

¹ *Early Christian Sculpture*; an Appendix to Mr. Parker's *Archæology of Ancient Rome*, 1876.

² Lampridius's *Memoir of Alexander Severus* is the authority for this: and he states, moreover, that Alexander desired to found a temple to the Saviour: and even that Hadrian had thought of doing the same. The Lararium is still distinguishable among the ruins of the Palatine. (Hemans's *Historical and Monumental Rome*, p. 196.) The tessellated patterns called *Opus Alexandrinum* bear this emperor's name.

idea of a king as shepherd of his people would fall in with this. These statuettes cannot be Gnostic images, which seem to have been either fancied or pretended portraits. (See Irenæus *Adv. Hær.* i. c. 25, § 6.) There is another reason for connecting the two shepherds with a very early date. They are unquestionably repetitions of the ancient image of the Hermes Criophorus at Tanagra, a well-known statue by Calamis. A woodcut of it will be found in Seeman's *Götter und Heroen*: and when one considers the number of Greeks in the Early Church, their familiarity with ideas of the Royal Shepherd, and Our Lord's own express comparison of Himself, it seems likely enough that some Christian artist (we know there were such persons, from Tertullian and elsewhere) should have adapted the Hermes to Christian uses. Dangerous, perhaps, such uses may have seemed to many, from the earliest times: but these, as has been said, are only statuettes between two and three feet high, and were kept in private. The heads of the Church seem always to have had the most intelligent—though probably unconscious—perception of the difference between a symbol and an idol. Consequently, they seem to have felt that a picture or bas-relief is more purely symbolic than the detached statue. But in any case, the Good Shepherd bearing the Lamb was only the symbolic repetition of the Lord's most gracious promise of Himself to fallen man, as the Saviour of the lost. And so we find it everywhere; most frequently according to the Calamis type: on sarcophagi, in stuccoes, on vases, at the bottom of glasses and platters, and everywhere in the Catacomb paintings.

There is little to be said of other detached statues of early Christian Rome. In marble, there remains only S. Hippolytus, Bishop of Ostia, in the Lateran: in bronze, the small standing figure of S. Peter, bearing the upright or Cross-monogram,¹ and the far-famed bronze or bell-metal statue in the nave of the great Cathedral of S. Peter. All the world knows something, and nobody in the world knows what are called the exact rights, of the controversy about this molten image. Professor Westwood's account of the

¹ Figured by Martigny, and in Münter's *Sinnbilder*, pl. 6. f. 21.

subject seems perfectly impartial. That it ever was a statue of Jupiter is nonsense, and gratuitously vexatious and insulting to Roman Catholics. For aught we know it may be made of the re-cast metal of a Jupiter, though that seems doubtful, by Mr. Parker's account. He says that an outward varnish of bronze has disappeared from the foot, under the kisses of generations, so as to betray that the statue is of bell-metal. Now bell-metal was not used till the twelfth century; and this fact, if accurate, fixes the date of the statue in the thirteenth, when the church was rebuilt. There was undoubtedly, as Professor Westwood says, a well-known statue of S. Peter at Rome, as far back as the eighth century; for Leo the Isaurian threatened to destroy it, and Gregory II.¹ mentions it twice as S. Peter's Image, in his letter to Leo. And this is probably the fine statue still remaining in the crypt, the body of which is antique and the head thirteenth century. These are in fact all the Christian statues to be found in Rome, notwithstanding the zealous labours of Seroux d'Agincourt, which extended over his fifty years' residence in Italy. Between S. Hippolytus and the twelfth century sculptures, he could not discover any well-authenticated work of the higher, or detached, character in art.

There seems to have been another reason why the Church in after times—as during and after the Iconoclastic divisions—should have had special difficulties about single detached figures, especially at or near life-size. It was a great misfortune, as we said, that Constantine permitted service before his portrait images. It was, in fact, a continuance of the lowest and worst form of paganism, *i.e.* of emperor-worship. If any idolatry deserved special and determined eradication, it was this: for it had been made the legal and constitutional ground of the worst persecution, that the Nazarenes would not pay a sacrifice to Divus Cæsar. And, either by oversight, or in that tendency to Oriental separation from mankind which Diocletian had begun, and Constantius afterwards openly affected, this worship or special rite before a graven image was still continued in the Church of Constantinople,

¹ Gibbon, vii. 193, 194.

It may have been only grateful commemoration of the first Christian Emperor and giver of Peace; it may have been a remnant of military honours to the Emperor, no more thought of as a way of return to paganism than trooping the colours of a modern regiment is, as a return to worship of the eagles. Nevertheless it thus continued lawful for Christians to repeat, to all outward seeming, the worst act of all pagan error; and the natural consequences were permitted and not withheld. The duty, or reverence, or "dulia" of Constantinople, before her founder-emperor, may not have been meant for more than reverence; the honour done to saints and martyrs may never have been intended to be more than honour. But the impulse to this visible service, in both cases, was that of the old popular idolatry; and in a short time the world claimed for their new images the local presence and power of God, and forgot Him for a new host of heaven.

This was one way in which the ancient idolatry returned upon the Christian Church. But there was another, far more widely and subtly misleading, and it showed itself decisively after Alaric's sack of Rome in 410. That was the final shock, which paganism never recovered. The ancient gods of Rome were vanquished utterly at last; they could do no more for her, and had departed from her, as from Carthage and Corinth and Jerusalem. They and their ruins were gone, and in their place the new Faith stood suffering and prevailing, well used to worse trial than barbarian onset. The Church was prepared to teach the wild invaders the name of Christ for the spiritual world to come, and to hand on to them, for this world, some remnants of the law, the arts, and letters of the empire they yet looked on with awe; not unmixed with wonder and apprehension at having overthrown so great a thing.

Again, it seems as if the barbarians (whether heretical Christians, like Alaric, or war-worshipping Northmen, like the Lombards) had another besetting temptation or backward road into polytheism, when they became Christians. They were not likely to go back to the worship of the ancient gods and the temple images, but to adore their own fathers, the great or good or brave gone before. There had

been, in fact, two forms of the earlier heathenism ; the pantheism of Greek nature-worship, first represented in Rome by Hestia and the hearth-fire, then developed into Olympus ; and the specially Roman cultus of the Penates, gods of the race, sometime priests of the hearth-fire. The former brought all the outer splendours and attractions of heathenism into Christianity ; the latter was the principle which developed worship of the Saints out of the Communion of Saints. And as the basilica and its imagery took the place of the temple, so the catacomb and oratory were like the cella memoriæ and the lararium. Both were adorned to the best of the maker's power ; first for decoration and instruction, then for the successive stages of emotion, devotion, admiration, aspiration, veneration, symbolic adoration of God, and worship of the image as containing Him. Symbolic teaching seems to have become a necessity by sheer force of the numbers of new heathen and barbarian disciples ; the evil was that a majority of these, by old inveterate need of a sign or visible object of worship, would set up a cultus of symbols, and a personal worship of saints as of heroes and demi-gods ; and this they did, eastward and westward, and through the whole Œcumene.

Setting aside the earliest and rudest forms of monogram or fish which are found on the earliest inscriptions, we have to say that no *bas-relief*, with distinctly Christian character, can be proved to be earlier than the fourth century. If there are any such monuments in existence, their date is lost ; they have been removed from their original site without record, and there is no chance of determining their authenticity. It is useless to complain of this, or quarrel with extinct authorities, who acted according to their lights : but we may learn from their proceedings that dilettantism and churchwardenism are the same in Rome as in our own land. Let us go on to what is left us. The first example or two possess considerable beauty.

About 650 years after, A.D. 359, two years before the dull and murderous Constantius gave place to Julian, the Consular Junius Bassus died, in the sad time of Liberius and Felix ; and his tomb was carved in Rome with a power of design, drawing, and execution, which is certainly most

extraordinary for the period. Those who talk of the decadence of art in Christian hands, should compare Bosio's faithful engravings of this work (to be found in his or Aringhi's or Bottari's works on *Subterranean Rome*) with the sculpture of Constantine's first days, before Christianity had ruled at all.¹ The Christian work might be by a tolerable sculptor of the Augustan age ; the Pagan is utterly barbarous. It is not archaic, or Byzantine, or ecclesiastical, but simply stupid, as by a man without mind, or eyes, or manual skill. All may see on the Arch of Constantine, the best that Rome could do, immediately before the seat of the empire and the arts had been transferred ; and it is no longer decadent, but deep in the bathos, safe from fall, and barbarous below observation. It is rather a curious analogy that pagan Rome, and the modern disciples of its Renascence, should lay claim to the arts as a peculiar property, exactly as Roman Catholicism and the pseudo-Gothic Revival did some years ago.

It is possible that the Roman Senate at the time of Constantine's accession may have been compelled to employ Roman workmen, and that they could find no great choice of them ; while the great family of Bassus may have been able to get better artists from Constantinople, fifty years after, when whatever technical power yet remained to the world was collected there. The bas-reliefs of Theodosius, on the pedestal of the obelisk in the Hippodrome, show a certain sense of order, equal division of space, balance, and unity of gesture, &c., but they indicate the decline of New Rome as well as of Old, and are not to be compared to this sarcophagus. Mr. Parker has at last succeeded in photographing it, in its place in the crypt of S. Peter's. It shows a little of the decadent taste for overloaded decoration, and the heads of the figures look too large, not that they really are so, but that they project in high relief, and seem from the photograph to have a top-heavy appearance. The plates in Bosio, Aringhi, and Bottari render them very well, except perhaps for a little exaggeration of the heads. The whole surface of

¹ See D'Agincourt, *Sculpture*, pl. iii. Theodosius's bas-reliefs, next plate but one.

the front sarcophagus is divided into two rows of small compartments or panels, each filled with a subject of Christian meaning. Between them are two stories of classical columns, supporting a Greek cornice above, and those in the lower row of compartments are united by arches alternately round and low gabled, as if with small pediments. The pointed form seems to appear here, perhaps for the first time in Christian work ; it is simply Greek ; but its use alternating with arches is significant, and it will appear again. Large birds are carved above the rounded arches, which are in fact *conchæ* or niches. The redundance of ornament in this monument is perhaps more Gothic than Greek : the general effect is far from tawdry or ostentatious, excellent taste being shown in the comparatively shallow carving, and the surface thoroughly studied as a whole. But the long entablature above is rather too complicated, having a carved fillet above, an inscription below, "dosseret" pillars, and false capitals, and another moulding in the frieze, and a third inside the niches. But it is not all mere florid repetition of decorative pattern without meaning : there is fresh and varied Christian imagery, as will be seen. The whole is luxuriant rather than luxurious ; and it is far from being without precedent in ancient sculpture of the Pheidian age, if significant images are multiplied all round the great central ideas of a work of art in their proper relation.

In the centre compartment of the upper row, Our Lord sits between two Apostles, His feet resting on the old and bearded bust which represents Uranus or Heaven, holding above its head the Veil of the Firmament, or the "darkness of the sky," which is beneath Him. The other groups in this line are the interrupted sacrifice of Isaac, the symbolical Hand of God holding back the knife ; the ram below Abraham's arm, and an attendant standing by, clad, like the patriarch, in the senatorial or pontifical toga, the altar of sacrifice being a small octagonal pillar. Next is an aged man between two younger figures, with an air of helplessness, possibly S. Peter after his denial. In numbers three and four, Christ stands with two soldiers before Pilate, for whom a servant holds an ewer and basin, and who seems

irresolute and disturbed ; another Roman figure beside him, more indifferent or decided, may be meant for Herod. Again, on the spectator's left of the lower row sits Job in his affliction, which seems to culminate in his wife's offer of a piece of crossed bread to him on a stick : a male figure significantly holding his nose. Then a really beautiful relief of Adam and Eve, perhaps rather short in proportion to their heads, yet correct in drawing and excellent in composition, with the Serpent coiling round the tree between them, and the corn-ears and the lamb on either side, to symbolise their future labour in delving and spinning. Next, the Entry into Jerusalem, with a disciple casting his garment before the Lord. A tree behind, with a second figure, may possibly be Zacchæus and the sycamore, as his presence at the beginning of the last journey to Jerusalem is often referred to in the sculptures. Then Daniel, with his arms outstretched as an Oranté, between two lions, in the usual catacomb form ; and eighth and last, a group consisting of an old man bound, and two figures, one of whom is drawing a sword : which may pass for the execution either of S. John the Baptist or S. James.

The historic reasons for dwelling on this singular work are many. In the first place, though found at Rome, it must have been carved by Byzantine, or Constantinopolitan or Neo-Greek artists ; and next, the group of Adam and Eve in particular, has the true *Charis* of old Greek work about its figures, though their heads are somewhat large. As much as Venice, Constantinople marks a confluence in history, where the decline of Greek and germs of Gothic idea appear together ; where Eastern asceticism supported the Western Church against iconoclast emperors ; where the imperial throne was long supported by Varangians from the North Seas. The manifold names of the city mark chapters of its history. Byzantium, Constantinople, Micklegarth, Stamboul, ROME—the last name still conveys the idea of a world's centre to men who never heard of the Italian mistress of the world.

But the series of little symbolical Lambs in the lower spandrils, or spaces between the arches, is yet more interesting.

Christ as Lamb of God, is represented holding a rod, and touching with it a small figure in a tomb, tightly swathed in grave-clothes; He is standing before the open book of the Apocalypse (I think the Seven Seals are indicated), He lays His hand or forefoot on the head of a smaller lamb, on which rays descend from a Dove; He holds a rod over vessels containing bread (the miracle of Cana), and, as Moses, He strikes the rock with a rod, His sheep receiving the water. There are pastoral scenes also on the ends of the sarcophagus, which, as d'Agincourt says, represent the Seasons. Whether as conventional ornament or not, they appear in the most ancient catacomb paintings, as those of *S. Prætextatus*; and like other decorative figures they seem to have been adopted and repeated from ancient ornament, and gradually invested with Christian meaning by being used as illustrations in preaching or commentary.

Bassus, says Bosio, was of the great Anician family, who early embraced and faithfully held to the Christian faith; and another great sarcophagus of theirs is that of *Probus* and *Proba*. It may represent the vertical treatment of the sculptured front, where the whole height or depth is divided into niches by columns, and filled by statues of Christ and His Apostles. Here there are five of these groups. The Lord stands in the centre of two Apostles, as usual, upon a rock from which flow the Four Rivers of Paradise, and which may be the earliest known instance of that emblem, unless the Lateran Cross of Baptism be still older. In the spandrels of the round arches which join these columns, are doves eating from baskets of small loaves—the Faithful feeding on the Bread of Life. The niches are cut into shallow coves or *conchæ*, and so are those of the smaller ends of the tomb. But there is a pathetic feature on the back of it; something is given to human sorrow. *Probus* and *Proba*, two really beautiful and noble figures, take leave of each other weeping, and with hands clasped for the last time in life. Two other figures in the side niches seem to encourage them. They are not without hope, but they must part; they have to die and go forth alone, like each of us; deprived for the time even of human Love, and having faith in Christ only. The fore-

warning of the true bitterness of death is given, so that all hearts must needs feel it ; but this plaintive acknowledgment of the burden of all men is all. The early Church is neither hopeless nor stoical ; nor does she indulge anywhere in outer signs of decay, or the disgusts of mortality. We are happily far from the mocking skulls and fleshless ribs of the Gothic and later Renaissance, adopted even more and more by later workmen, and too well suited to the lowest taste of Italian or German grotesque. Those who have read *Modern Painters*, vol. iv. part vi. chapter xix., will know the most powerful analysis of the effect of thoughts of death and its concomitants on painters and symbolists. It is harshest in the north ; and in caricature and dubious work of the early part of this century it rose in this country to a kind of atheistic gallows-mirth, which virtually repeated the ravings of Hebert and Anacharsis Clootz. By what Juvenal says, it may have been the same in pagan Rome,¹ but as to early Christian art I believe that, excepting in Northern MSS., and there unfrequently, there is no representation of a skeleton, or any personification of Death, till the time of Giotto, who certainly painted one at Assisi.² No doubt the varied horrors of the Torcellese mosaics, and the Hells of the Utrecht Psalter, show that the real terrors of death were dwelt upon in earlier art. But this can not even have begun before the seventh century.

Now, anybody who will compare these two sarcophagi with the contemporary carvings of the Arch of Constantine, will see not only that there had been an absolute pagan decadence, complete to idiocy, before the Church ceased to be subject to regular persecution ; but that a considerable Renaissance or revival took place in Constantine's days. All the architectural, or at least the constructive side of art, retained its power. The brickwork of the fourth century was certainly somewhat inferior to the first. The Composite capital

¹ "Esse aliquos Manes, et subterranea regua,
Et contum, et Stygio ranas in vortice nigras
Nec pueri credunt, nisi qui nondum ære lavantur."

² I could not find it when I was there ten years ago, and it may have vanished, being near the great door ; but it is duly mentioned by MM. Crowe and Cavalcaselle.

had proved a failure, and d'Agincourt's examples show some degeneracy in ornament from the last golden days of the Antonines. But architecture was not, like the other arts, delivered to Christian workmen in hopeless decrepitude. And it at once underwent a great change and development in their hands: the great result of the vault and dome and fourfold naves soon followed the transference. The decorative and representative arts were decadent beyond help, because they were thoroughly involved with idolatry, and the idolatrous side of the Græco-Roman spirit. They had to be left to die, and re-created through a new birth and novel infancy or archaism. The constructive side of art was free from idolatrous meaning or association. The Church avoided heathen temples and took the secular basilicas: a house is a house, brick and stone are not pagan, nor is there any Christian objection to Vitruvius.

But for the alliance between the Church and the Empire, Dante's error about the "fatal gift of Constantine" contains truth enough to last for many centuries. We cannot well avoid some notice of how Imperial patronage affected the Church; we have seen already how the most fatal form of image-worship, expressed reverence to the statue of the Emperor, was innocently introduced at the very beginning. But the Christian Faith now finally emerged from "confessions" and catacombs; and except for sepulchral celebrations over martyrs' graves, the subterranean system of worship came to an end—so it seems by Jerome's words. By the new alliance, the Church became possessed of a still great architecture, which could construct anything within the power of man, and that in a civilised or economic way. Slave-labour was still used no doubt. Still the employer had to obey law, and paid his workmen a sort of livelihood. The great works of Rome were not done by mere exaction of life and labour from hordes of onion-eating bondsmen. However, while the Church took possession of the constructive skill and resources

¹ *Inferno*, xix. 115:—

"Ahi Constantino, di quanto mal fu matre,
Non la tua conversione, ma quella dote
Che da te prese il primo ricco patre!"

of Rome, she became involved with the utter decay and barbarism of Gentile sculpture. It had receded ever since Pheidias ; but, considered as architectural decoration, sculpture was hopelessly degraded by Constantine's time ; and as the work of luxury, domestic or palatial, it was immoral or idolatrous ; a great deal of it was thoroughly bad work in drawing, feeling, cutting, and all else. There are numbers of probable exceptions, for good artists must have remained till very late in the fourth century, when the tombs of Bassus and Probus were carved ;¹ but these were last and very isolated efforts. The only work for Christian artists was in sepulchral portrait or decoration. Sculpture was long forbidden in the Church, and in fact iconolatry never fostered art, though artists in after days may have made fortunes by it. Image worshippers do not want art or beauty, or care about it ; they want a picture to wink and cry, or a statue to hold out its hand. Goethe was right, in fact, that miraculous pictures are not often well painted ; because, in fact, it is not easy to get people who believe in miraculous pictures to see the merit of well-painted ones.

I do not know if it has been sufficiently understood or set forth how entirely religious persecution by the State power derives from the Roman Empire, and came into the Church as part heritage of that most heathen system. It must be remembered that the Pagan theory of the Empire had made heresy high treason : in the first place, as disobedience to the Military Imperator—which was Pliny's ultimate reason for capitally punishing Christians ; and in the second, as offence against the Numen, the Majestas, the divine right of Divus Cæsar. This Diocletian had finally enforced and formulated, though Caligula and Nero had assumed it. When Theodosius and poor Honorius are spoken of as the first Christian persecutors, it must be remembered that persecution was really imperial. The temptation to a Christian emperor to deal with paganism or heresy as an offence against the State was too great. It seemed a fair retribution on the former, and was too ready a weapon against the latter : but it may be said with truth, that the Arians in the East had been the

¹ About 359.

earliest offenders. S. Ambrose might perhaps, by we know not what protest, have at least proclaimed that the Church will in no case strike with the sword. The occasion would have been, no doubt, the execution of Priscillian and his followers by Maximus, A.D. 385. S. Martin of Tours did most earnestly protest against it, before and after the fact, and Ambrose and others joined him. But it may have been impossible for an Archbishop, who had till late in life been a great administrator of the Empire, to distinguish the Empire, as a Christian despotism, from its former self as a Pagan system. It is conceivable, though it may not have been possible, and certainly did not happen, that S. Ambrose might have acted against minor offenders, as he had acted against Theodosius, with the spiritual weapon only. At Honorius's accession, Stilicho deferred to the Saint in spiritual matters, and the Theodosian edicts of persecution might have been modified, or not at once reinforced, as they were. But the new alliance between unlimited Imperial power over the body, and boundless spiritual authority over conscience, was too promising a combination. Two such men as Ambrose and Stilicho may justifiably have thought it the only principle which might yet hold East and West Rome together. It was reserved for modern times, after 1,500 years of vain coercion, to confess a truth which Athanasius, perhaps, had seen afar off, and given to Jovian,¹ that the Church and the Empire should bear with error, though they bore witness against it; that they should acknowledge, not that error is sinless, but that it is an offence on which no written law can lay its hand of penalty.² The alliance of the Empire involved the vicious practices of the Empire. Persecution was one, and bad art another.

Anybody who looks at the second plate of Seroux

¹ Broglie, *Hist. des IV. prem. Siècles*. I am unable to find the passage in any work of Athanasius, and have unhappily lost the reference to Broglie.

² Athanasius had been condemned, and Liberius, Bishop of Rome, exiled for supporting him, A.D. 355. Ambrose was then either 15 or 19 years old, and must have remembered the Arian coercions of his youth. Honorius's first impression of an event in his early boyhood probably was his father's (and indeed Stilicho's) submission to Ambrose.

d'Agincourt's *Sculpture*, or compares any good photographs of the works in question, will see that the Empire led the Church into bad art, not the Church the Empire. The work of Titus's day is good, that of Septimius Severus's bad ; but that of Constantine's, done long before his Christianity, such as it was, could have affected the arts, is so much worse than either as to puzzle us completely. It is indeed extraordinary that entire and absolute barbarism should have come on the public works of a capital full of Greek masterpieces, in little more than a century.¹ D'Agincourt's plate compares at one glance three pairs of Victories, from the Arch of Titus, from that of Septimius Severus, and from Constantine's : the two last being unequivocally copies of the first, with such variety as the incapacity of the carvers necessarily involved. The Victories of the Flavian period are tall, graceful figures, human, but not coarse, or even voluptuous ; they carry light banners ; their streaming drapery well expresses "the great wind of their going," and it seems, with their powerful wings, as if they really floated fast through the air. They look as if they really might fly, and are free from that distressing resemblance to pheasants hard hit in the back which has characterised so many representations of the heavenly host from their time to this. Those of the Arch of Severus are huddled in the spandril, ungracefully short, and square in form ; they seem to be ineffectually poking at each other at a distance with ponderous staves, which bear small trophies ; their faces are utterly vulgarised from the fair, expressionless type of the better work ; and all their faults are repeated and exaggerated in the third pair of the Arch of Constantine. Nothing can be more evident than that all study of nature, or search for beauty, or careful drawing from the form or from drapery, had long ceased before such brutal work could be done for such a place. One workman had long copied another, losing all sense of beauty at once, and all power of

¹ The verge or point of fall is undoubtedly in the age of Aurelius ; and one great immediate cause was the desolating pestilence of Verus, introduced by his returning troops into the Western Empire, after his Persian campaign. See Niebuhr, *Lectures*, Vol. III., p. 251, where the decay of Art is directly attributed to this.

accuracy as a consequence. And such decline, and not less rapid, will always follow where mindless repetition from other men's works is allowed to take the place of personal study of the works of God's hands; nor will our own popular schools of design ever thrive without such study. Of course the masters of a style must be studied, as guides and directors; and the advanced pupil need claim no more than to be allowed to treat his own subjects in their style; but that liberty should be allowed him, and his subjects for decoration should be chosen in greenwood galleries and academies of free fields.

These figures alone are enough to show that the graphic arts were dead before any Christian destructions were wrought in the temples on existing works of art. It will not be pretended that Christianity destroyed good drawing between the time of Titus and Severus; and we have already had something about the distresses of those latter days. For one example only—anybody who is compelled, as we have been, really to read up the history of some part of the fourth century, with careful reference to the Theodosian Code in all articles—*De Decurionibus*, *De Tributis*, &c.—will form an idea of the taxation of that time; of its oppressive scrutiny, its unceasing rapacity, its vexation, its tyranny of officials, its pressure on neighbour against neighbour, the misery suffered and inflicted by the local boards of curiales, who, themselves ruined, had to extract the last *solidus* from their friends. One can only say, that when that state of chronic wretchedness existed, and was liable to be varied by invasion and massacre, good art was impossible in towns; and that it never had existed in the country at all, except perhaps in Attica or Sicily. No one could have much heart for it towards the end of the fourth century. It has seemed to me from paintings, such as the decorations of the Doria-Pamphili Villa and some of the earliest Christian paintings of tombs or catacombs, that some Romans of the first and second centuries were still fond of country life, happy in spring and at harvest, good to their sheep and cattle and doves, and generally fond of pets. In better times they might have taken to naturalist drawing, like the Lombard Giotto; but their own and their

children's desolation was determined, and proved too much for them.

Besides its alto-relievo Victories, which are large figures, d'Agincourt's plate compares three processional bas-reliefs from the same arches. Roman carvings of this kind entirely differed in motive from the old Greek. The Greek bas-relief was long thought of as a temple decoration, to be made as beautiful as possible for the temple's sake; and so they gave their groups plenty of room, as compositions. The Roman bas-relief was primarily triumphal, to the glory of the conqueror; and the carvers had to get in as many conquerors as possible. Romans never thought their gods cared much for carvings, if they could win victory and deal death. Mars without the wall was a practical deity; he liked real battle, genuine slaughter, and the great triumph of many a mile,—with its files of doomed prisoners, and the disciplined banditti of the world. In the darkening days of Roman religion we may observe how like ourselves they were in not caring for art, because it had never been sacred to them. Not that it is wrong to disregard that which does not appeal to the best of the spirit that is in you: our weak point is in pretending to care for it. What I mean is simply that art had never been sacred to Romans, and had no hold on them; that all their notions of bas-relief centred in imitations of the Triumph; and that the triumphs very generally ended with the gladiators, and public massacre of prisoners. The soldiery and people of Rome desired that kind of sensation; they were encouraged on principle to desire it; and art is not for wolves. They could see cutting of throats very often, and it was far more exciting than carving of marble. The amphitheatre was to them what the Dionysiac theatre had been to Athens. Instead of tragedy, says Horace, they called out for bears and boxers, which is really quite like our noble selves in the last century; and when the *Medea* of Euripides was reproduced for them, Seneca found it necessary for her to kill her children on the stage instead of behind; which is just the sort of thing we are coming to in our own theatres.

Well, the consequence of their taste for triumphal bas-relief, and also for family portraiture in sepulchral tablets,

was that sculpture got *huddled*. It was not done for art's sake, but as boastful record; and the marble became a crowded stage, with towers, temples, siege operations, the tortoise creeping to the wall, vineæ, balistæ and battering-rams in the background. Nothing can be more barbarous than the Column of Trajan, except its Napoleonic imitation; though the Constantinian work is of course duller. However, in d'Agincourt's plate, the sacrificial procession of Titus is quite Greek. The bearing of the figures has a certain solemn Charis; the bulls are well carved from nature or ancient models: a fair amount of repose and unity belongs to the whole, because the figures have standing-room; and nobody shoves. No doubt Greeks knew how to make the most of their space. Pheidias marshals his knights of Athens in very close order on the inner frieze of the Parthenon: but then they are in order, and move rhythmically. All who know that work will feel their magnificent unity of action as a column. Now the Septimian figures are closely packed, with dubious meaning; one does not see what they are at, and their vacillating legs can with difficulty be assigned to their ambiguous bodies; the artist apparently feeling unable to complete any figure perfectly, and trying to escape in the crowd. Yet they are grouped, and have a fairly good decorative effect; while the corresponding figures on the Arch of Constantine have no order or composition whatever.

For portrait-sculpture after that age, its best work is the statue of S. Hippolytus of Ostia,¹ though its date is probably much later: but the examples given by d'Agincourt, Sculpture, Pl. 3, can hardly be so bad as his draughtsmen represent them. Still, sculpture had now reached the bottom of bathos. Then the taking of Rome put a stop to it altogether in the West; and in Byzantium it began with a new spirit, imprisoned in a new archaism. Its first attempts were still encumbered with imperial luxury or tawdriness: it was yet in state service or alliance,—it might sleep till a new race could arise to take it up; it was as barbarous as the Lions of Mycenæ, and mosaic took its place in churches. Theodoric

¹ Parker, *Phot.* 2899.

reigned at Ravenna and Verona, but even his effigies had to be done in mosaic.*

One observation of Mr. Hemans's is very remarkable ; that the inscription on the Arch of Constantine contains a first and dubiously implied recognition of Monotheism on the part of the Roman Senate. The after-contest between Symmachus and S. Ambrose about the altar and statue of Victory in their Curia shows that it did not mean much ; but still the words "Instinctu Divinitatis" are used instead of "Nutu Jovis, O.M." or other heathen form, to express the idea of Constantine's acting under Divine guidance. The phrase, he says, is so singular, so unlike the forms of classic epigraphy, that archæologists long thought the inscription had been altered from its original words ; but the Chevalier de Rossi has ascertained, by careful inspection of the holes for nails, which once fastened the now-lost bronze letters, that no change has been made from the antique words. The coincidence is interesting to the historian of art. It seems to point out that art had had its period of heathen service, and must perish for a while at contact with the true faith ; and that sculpture in particular, having fallen lowest, and ministered most closely to idolatry, cruelty and impurity, must fall into utter decrepitude, vanish, and become sacred once more in a new Duty.

For there is now, it may be said, no more secular sculpture or painting till the central Tuscan Renaissance. Art for art's sake always exists while any skilled person does his best with all his skill ; but if this expression be intended to express the honourable search after pure beauty, then such secular art first raises its sweet equivocal face again with Sandro Botticelli's Aphrodite. Consular diptychs are our only present exception in the way of sculpture, and they are not art at all. From henceforth art is Christian : she is ascetic and barbarous for the present, in rude or enervated hands. Nevertheless, she is once more allied with the spiritual thoughts of men, and must therefore dwell always with the

* One at Pavia, another at Verona. Procopius, *De Bello Gothico*, I. xxiv. The head of the latter fell away before Theodoric's death ; the middle at his daughter Amalosuntha's ; and the legs when Belisarius appeared.

best intellect and highest aspiration. D'Agincourt's remark on the Catacomb frescoes and sarcophagi, simply expresses the state of the case. "Une circonstance particulière," he drily says, "m'a imposé la loi de parler de ces cimetières souterraines ; c'est que les productions de la Sculpture et de la Peinture qui ont servi de les orner sont à peu près les seuls monuments des premières siècles de la Décadence, et même des deux siècles précédens, qui sont parvenus jusqu'à nous."

The porphyry urns of the Empress Helena and S. Constantia (Constantine's mother and daughter, who died in 328 and 354) seem to possess no religious meaning. The former is ornamented with mounted figures, fighting, flying, and pursuing ; the latter is covered with quite ethnic vines, wreaths, genii and peacocks.¹ Some of the earlier paintings may give the idea of a masked symbolism, and devices possibly cut by heathen hands to Christian orders ; as if rich people exposed to suspicion or denunciation confessed the Lord under their breath : but these are almost unmeaning.

The bas-reliefs of the base or pedestal of the Obelisk of Theodosius, in the Hippodrome of Constantinople, convey some idea of late fourth century carving. They are very stiff and monotonous, without remembrance or reflection of Greek grace ; but they show what they mean, and their forms are less offensive than those of the Rome of Constantine. They show a new sense of order, of equal division of spaces, balance and repetition of gesture, and their features are not abominable ; but they cannot be compared with the tomb of Bassus. It is a memorable work, that tomb of the Christian Consular of Rome, when consuls shook the earth no longer, and the trebly hundred Triumphs were so nearly told.²

The curious Roman taste for natural objects appears on some of the tombs, which were often used repeatedly, for successive occupants, when the sarcophagus, or flesh-destroying marble, so called, had done its office. That of Zosimus and Damasus II. had naked genii, a vintage scene, a goat with

¹ Parker, 209, 210. Figured by Aringhi, ii. 41, 157 ; Bottari, iii. pl. 132 ; d'Agincourt, *Sculpt.* pl. v. For views of Christian Sarcophagi, see Parker, No. 2917 and 318.

² The last Triumph was Honorius's and Stilicho's, A.D. 406, for the repulses of Alaric at Pollentia, and Radagaisus at Florence.

panniers of grapes, a cock, tortoise, lizard, peacock, and an eagle ridden by one of the genii. This is Pompeian ; but it looks like the rudiment of the future Gothic naturalism, or taste for representing all sorts of things for their own sake ; and is certainly like that of the *enlumineurs* of the twelfth century.

But a more marked feature of transition between Greek and Gothic, or let us say in this place, horizontal and vertical ornamentation, is the use of round and occasionally of pointed arches in Christian sarcophagi. They alternate in the tomb of Bassus, and in another of very early date there are obtusely pointed vaults, beautifully formed of the branches of interlacing palm-trees, with a delightful oriental Gothicism.¹ Or the surface of a tomb is cut into vertical niches or conchæ by its dividing columns, and these, as we have seen, filled with statues of the Lord and His Apostles, in exact anticipation of Norman sculpture. One can trace the divergence of vertical and horizontal decoration. Some sort of arrangement or composition is a necessity, when you have a wall to decorate ; when you have an arcade or cloister to deal with, it is the same, but the columns and vaults generally direct it for you. But with a flat wall space, the thing is first to divide it into spaces or panels ; and in this you must be guided by the horizontal lines, at top and on the ground, in the first instance. Somehow, and in some proportion, they must be broken up ; whether your pictures are on a small scale with large mouldings and divisions, as at Pompeii, or all over sixty feet of wall like the Paradise of Tintoret, you must apportion the space somehow for them.

If you dwell on horizontal lines in so doing, your ornament will take the same form as the procession of the Knights of Athens in the Parthenon, and probably, as the painted histories of its interior. It will be of a processional character, like the great Army of Saints and Martyrs in S. Apollinare Nuova at Ravenna. Or you may wish to be guided by vertical lines, and break up your wall with single figures, and dividing borders : but that if done in painting, will probably involve a certain monotony, and the imitation of architectural

¹ Aringhi, i. 289, 295.

divisions in paint, which is less satisfactory. Both ways were followed by Gothic builders, as seemed best and best-looking. Greeks and Goths both wanted to express their belief or tell their histories from right to left as in reading, and arranged their figures accordingly. And both equally enjoyed a good perspective of columns, or grand unbroken moulding ; only the Gothic vaults above the columns made infinite varieties of perspective and complications of curve ; which different men, or the same persons at different times, preferred or postponed to the flat upper-wall and continuous entablature. The distinctive Gothic taste for leaf and flower carving must be derived from the ancestral architecture in wood, and the forest habits of the early North.

Our great example of the early Italian or Lombard Gothic will be S. Zenone, because it is best known, and best described and most thoroughly drawn and photographed, especially by Professor Ruskin. All I have to say of it now is that its front is all over bossy sculpture, as purely decorative as earnestly instructive ; and that its surface is cut into panels by horizontal lines to suit architectural forms, just as in the Parthenon. All the common-sense of art is Greek ; and it survives naturally in Christian work.

It was lately observed by Mr. Ffoulkes, in a very remarkable sermon preached at S. Mary's, before the University of Oxford, that this wonderful distinction existed between the Christian Faith and all others, that the former has carefully preserved the records and documents of other great creeds, as well as its own. It has in fact had such confidence in itself, as to think that all others, willingly or unwillingly, bear witness to it as of God. Accordingly, we owe the preservation and study of the Jewish Scriptures, of the Classics, and in a great degree of the Vedas and the Koran, to Christian labours. And this applies also to the arts of Greece, and their great remaining documents. They cannot be multiplied ; they cannot be repeated ; but they have had their immortal fame from Christian artists and thinkers. These have understood that such beauty and wonder has not survived 2,000 years for nothing, but endures to bear witness to the history and the doing of the great Hellenic race. The Church made use of

Greek language and Greek method all along, for teaching, for edification, for sacred symbolism and pleasure in beauty; and even as S. Paul, the Hebrew-Greek, became all things to all men by universal sympathy in Christ, and used Greek language and poetry to teach his converts, so the Church has always used the languages of symbol and colour, because of their delightfulness, to teach her own history, and impress her own creed.

Christian Ivories and Metal-work.—Professor Westwood of Oxford is the only or the chief person in this country who has, systematically and on a large scale, collected, catalogued and described ivory carvings, as specimens of art and documents of history. Ivory sculpture is a separate department, less historically important than work in marble or fresco, but with advantages and value of its own.

First, we possess an unbroken series of such carvings, beginning with Egyptian work of about B.C. 980; and there are valuable sculptures all through the third and fourth and the eleventh and twelfth centuries A.D.; during which times we have so little in stone: in fact, nearly all the secular carvings after the second century are in ivory. It is easy to understand how this came about. The material ivory was not valued enough to make the sculptures worth "collecting," by Roman or barbarian plunderers. Nor were they heavy or bulky enough to be built into fortresses, or heaved over battlements upon storming parties, or burnt into lime to advantage. They had therefore a chance of being spared, unless when some virtuoso of the type of Nero or Caracalla indulged in destruction purely on its own account. Anybody who prized them at all would do so for their subject's sake.

Then there was a continued succession of what were called diptychs, imperial and consular. These were folding ivory tablets; two-leaved in the first instance, with wax for writing on in the inside, and carved on the outer side in low relief; generally from twelve to fifteen inches high, by five or six in breadth. It had long been the custom for consuls, prætors, ædiles, and other magistrates, to make presents of such tokens to their friends on taking office. The diptych bore the name

and titles of the official, whoever he was. Also, on such twofold tablets, in a Christian church, were written names of Christians living and dead, which were read out during the celebration of Holy Communion. Originally, the names of those who had made offerings to supply bread and wine for the elements were thus read; but the custom extended to a general commemoration of departed members of the congregation. It was more of the nature of canonization than of prayer for the dead. In fact the word canonization really means placing a name in the canon of the Mass.¹ Only one purely ecclesiastical diptych is mentioned as even conjecturally earlier than the fifth century, but there are Christian or Christianised ivories from the fourth. I say Christianised ivories, because many diptychs have been converted into bindings for service-books, and some, of heathen origin in the first instance, have been converted to Christian use like the sarcophagi; perhaps in some cases with alterations. This is, however, rather dubious, as Professor Westwood altogether dismisses the story of the altered Antiphonary of Monza, where the two consuls were turned into David and Gregory the Great by having tonsures cut in their Roman bristles.

I have told it in *Art-Teaching of the Primitive Church*, and give it up with regret, not at having told it, but at losing it. Dom Guéranger believed it.

Anyhow, two ivory portraits remain; both great and glorious, both in a manner suspended between Christendom and heathenism; and had the carvers of the time been less uniformly idiotic, we might from Gori's careful engraving² conjecture something of the features of Boëthius and the mighty Stilicho. How strange it seems that the Church should long have claimed the heathen statesman, and repudiated the Christian soldier, who twice saved Rome against herself, and gave his throat to the murderer rather than defend himself by civil war in the face of Alaric! I should wonder that no one has ever made Stilicho the hero of a

¹ Rev. R. Sinker, Trin. Coll. Camb., *Smith's Dict. of Christian Antiquities*, "Diptychs."

² *Thesauri Veterani Diptychorum*, vol. i. p. 128, Flor. 1775; Boëthius next.

tragedy—if I thought a hundred people in London had ever heard of him.¹

When one thinks of ivory sculpture, one is carried back to the great chryselephantine statues of the Pheidian age, to Athene of the Parthenon and Zeus of Olympia. It is true that Pheidias would probably have rather executed both statues in marble, at least we know he wished for the less costly material for Athene, the earlier work. But had any great chryselephantine statue remained, it would I think have added greatly to our knowledge of the decorative colours of Greek temple interiors; in which the white and gold agalma must have been always the central and chief light, to be set off by harmonious contrast, and the subordination of all surrounding things. But nobody who is studying either classical, or dark-age, or early modern history, should neglect opportunities of looking at the collection of ivories in the British Museum. "These works, being carved in low relief, partake of the nature both of sculpture and painting," says Professor Westwood (virtually repeating Professor Ruskin's expression, that a bas-relief is really a drawing in natural light and shade, instead of in artificially pencilled shade). "They are illustrative," he goes on, "of the whole decline and fall of western art; they are the principal monuments, except the miniatures in MSS., in which the artistic hagiology of the east is recorded; they present the most copious commentary on the spiritual and romantic life of the Middle Ages, which the art of the sculptors has bequeathed to us." The Vatican collection is the greatest in the world, and no visitor to Rome should neglect it; but our own is quite sufficient for either artists or historians.

It is not much use describing these carvings, as everybody can see original examples at South Kensington as well as the British Museum, and imitation-casts like Professor Westwood's are scarcely distinguishable from them. But they enable us, better than anything else, to trace the transition of the Empire

¹ Some of us may remember Lord Beaconsfield's quotation from Claudian as applied to the late Duke of Wellington, *De Bello Getico*, 458:—

"Donec pulverem sub turbine, sideris instar
Emicuit Stilichonis apex, et cognita fulsit
Canities."

and its arts from the classical into the Byzantine stage. In secular work this is all decadence, at least if decadence is possible after a certain depth has been reached. Anybody who will consider what the draped forms of the Elgin marbles would have been like in ivory and gold,¹ and who knows what the ivories of the decline are like, will understand what decadence means, and how much it is connected with neglect of the study of nature. There is no evidence that any classical artist studied any natural object after the third century, except in the instance already given, and in one or two MS. miniatures hereafter to be named. The sculptures of Constantine's time, and these diptychs, show that the art of drawing was lost, and not to be recovered till a new race should attempt it.

And here, from the bottom of the bathos, as far as yet explored in art, one may have one backward glance at its history, and consider how we have got thus far, to all appearance even to the end of all things. I do not wish to say much more about art and morality ; but every historian ought to compare art with contemporaneous states of society ; and if both move together to the abyss, it goes to prove a connexion between them. The decadence of art means the decadence of artists, as traceable in their works. In ages when national spirit is extinct ; when spiritual hope is shaken by terror without and anathema within ; when all high intellects and noble spirits are labouring to death, in the agonies of defensive war on their own ground, or the politics of national danger and shame ; when the conquering energies of one great race have enveloped the world and are dying out in crime ; when its administrative power has made all civilisation into one machine now falling to pieces—then art dissolves with other things. The centre of the world had become the Babylon of its corruption. Roman city-life as illustrated by Juvenal had taken the place of the happy town-and-country life of ancient Attica. In times like the Decadence we do not expect any good art, and we do not find it. Without arguing that all the people were degraded

¹ If any person breathes who really desires to know all that is known about chryselephantine sculpture, and many other interesting details of Athenian art, Quatremère de Quincy's work on the statue of the Olympian Zeus will be delightful and instructive reading to him.

because their art was bad ; we are quite sure that both art and people were fallen. We are certainly so much nearer the truth that art and morality are correlatives, the first depending on and varying with the second. When we find immoral work, we may say the men who produced it were immoral ; when we find it coarse and skillless, we may say they were untaught ; when it is religious and ugly, that its producers were devout, and gloomily careless ; when we find devout idea and brilliant colour, we may say religion is there with its gloom relieved, and hope emerging. If we find ascetic work possessing beauty of feature as well as colour, monastic purity combined with sweetness of temper and idea, we say the ascetic is of the type of Fra Beato Angelico. Again, when beside religious work we find the battles of men, and the chase, and the forest, all rendered in form or colour, we are sure that the hunter of deer and the warrior have taken to the arts ; when we find all manner of oddities and symbolic reflections on the incongruities of this world of time, and the spiritual world of hope, we say we have reached the Teutonic grotesque, and feel ourselves among our own people ; when the old Athenian study of nature, and man as its flower, is renewed in Etruria, we have reached Niccolo Pisano ; when we find religious earnestness and powerful imagination labouring to sanctify all human life through art, in the Faith, then we know we have got to Giotto. In short, history is the record of the thoughts and doings of men, art is an important part of their doing, and you may judge of men, through it ; and as by generalisation you judge of the periods, so by particular manner and sign you judge of the painter himself. By the Theseus and the frieze of knights, one knows that Pheidias delighted in manhood and horse-taming ; by the Fates, that he revered womanhood ; by the works of Turner, that the inner fountain of wonder at God's working leapt within him to the end.

There is one more observation on the parallel degradation of art and life in the later Roman Empire, that the natural reaction of asceticism is visible in both at nearly the same time. The Byzantine and the earlier Gothic are impressed with the severity of the Early Church. In societies where

ties of marriage and family were almost destroyed, ascetic life seemed the only sure refuge, to those who desired to be ruled by conscience and clean life. Beauty was for a time considered an evil. See the offensive Eve in the Bible of S. Paul, and d'Agincourt, *Peinture*, pl. xliii. Weariness of the visible world of nature had set in; and in such symbolic art as was possible for the monkhood, something like a religious pursuit of ugliness may be traced in mosaics and MSS. One cannot draw or colour without study from nature, or study nature if one believes her wholly accursed.

The decadence may perhaps be traced in the ivories. The very early diptych of Rufus Probianus, A.D. 322, is given by Professor Westwood in his notes on *Early Christian Sculptures and Ivory Carvings*, and it is not bad in its forms or composition, though the figures are rather short. There is a pretty Greek lily-bordering, rather too elaborate; the consul sits in his sella in fair perspective, though the altar below is wrong; and the drapery is fair enough. This was done three years before the Council of Nice; and with it may be compared the Barberini ivory, a carving generally supposed to represent Constantius. He is mounted on a horse, which the carver has endeavoured to represent rearing in perspective; he is attended by genii and victories, and tributary figures are below him, bearing ivory tusks and other treasures. Above is a small bust of our Saviour, without the nimbus, and giving the Greek benediction with the first, second, and fourth fingers extended. He holds a sceptre with ball and cross, and the sun and moon are above Him. All is clearly cut, but quite without drawing. Allowance should of course be made, in looking at engravings from ivory carvings, for the exquisite colour and semi-transparency of the material. No drawing can give a notion of the real effect. But in this work the horse and the emperor are alike clumsy and heavy, the heads, feet and hoofs throughout too large, the violent foreshortening a failure in an attempt which a true workman would never have made. The small figures are too small, the procession confused, the faces unmeaning, anatomy or proportion there is none. Art has given way to pride of taste and pompous luxury, and Christianity is squeezed into narrow compass

above, to make room for the stupid face and gross form of the murderer of all his own race ; whose long search after the life of Julian perhaps sealed the fate of the world, by setting the only genius in the Roman Empire at deadly variance with the only faith.

In Western diptychs, says Sir Digby Wyatt, the consul is generally standing ; in the Eastern he sits in his curule chair, that curule chair which is so often and so quaintly added to the state of Frankish and Saxon kings. In either position he generally bears the mappa or napkin, in act to give the ancient signal for beginning the games by throwing it into the ring. (Whether this has anything to do with casting down the warder or not, I have no idea.) The consular games themselves are represented on many diptychs. It was to the honour of Constantinople that gladiators had never been massacred in her amphitheatres ; nor were they in Rome after S. Telemachus in A.D. 404. Honorius and Stilicho had substituted military displays, slaughter of beasts of chase, and what seems to have been a revival of the equestrian Game of Troy. These carvings represent much chariot-racing, as may be supposed, and some rather dangerous games with wild animals. Men are inclosed in barrels or iron-gratings to be snuffed at and rolled about by lions or bears, and there are combats like those of real bestiarii. Some are raised and lowered by ropes and pulleys just beyond the animal's reach, or are (apparently) dodging and irritating him from behind screens or barriers. One curious and disgusting amusement seems to have consisted in secing men's noses pinched by large live crabs.¹ The principal person is always rigid and unmeaning in countenance, and all antique skill in depicting life is changed to laborious effort at the embroideries of the consular robes ; and here we may observe the Byzantine tendency to florid ornamentation, for want of skill to do anything else. Again, as was noticed above, all the easy unconscious Greek skill, in perspective by eye, hand, and practice from the figure, is utterly lost. Graphic power is gone in every detail, and the question of its revival is really the question of the Renaissance. This word does not mean

¹ *Gori*, i. p. 280 ; *Diptychon Leodiense* ; also at p. 219.

the revival or incongruous repetition of Greek or Roman forms in northern buildings, it means the revival of Greek study from nature, and renewal of the human powers of contemplation and imitation. It seems as if no race can learn this twice, and modern Greeks have certainly never regained it. It seems certain that no race can acquire it without a longer or shorter course of barbaric effort, and then of archaic study. For this the Lombard race began to prepare even in the sixth century, as soon as they were settled in the pleasant places of Lombardy and Etruria, and had the limestones and marbles of the Alps and Apennines to work on. Their history and early work, and the changes they wrought, and additions they made to the structure and ornament of the Basilica, circular or oblong-square, which they at once adopted as they found it, for secular and especially for Church purposes, may be for us another time.

One ivory there is which everybody looks at with the deepest interest, and nobody knows much about. It is the far-famed diptych of Rambona, in the Christian Museum of the Vatican, belonging to the tenth century, as it would seem. Two angels, supporting a medallion or *Imago Clypeata* of our Lord, are the last and quaintest reflex of Titus's twin Victories. Below is a Crucifixion, with the sun and moon as human figures bearing torches, the Blessed Virgin and St. John. But under all are carved the Roman wolf and twins, seeming to support the Cross. On the other leaf is the Madonna and Child, with Cherubim on wheels, which recall the Vision of Ezekiel. It seems to record the triumph of the Christian faith over the Roman Empire; and is one of the strangest relics in the world, because, though it marks the very nadir of artistic execution, it also shows that men were once more returning to graphic symbols in the endeavour to express things which they felt to be beyond oral teaching in articulate speech. Thoughts come before words, written or painted, and the thoughts are assuredly here, though the power of expression is hardly present, and beauty very far away.

CHAPTER X.

MSS. AND MINIATURES.

I THINK that nobody has traced the connexion between the illumination of the Middle Ages, and the naturalist art of our own days, so well as the author of *Modern Painters* in vol iv. of that work (Chapters xiv. and xv., pp. 196, &c.). But we have to begin at the far end of modern art, before Illumination, properly so-called, had begun, but when miniature, as distinguished from illumination, was almost the only branch of art in active employment. We will have the full distinction immediately, but let us just note in passing that miniature is the ancient ornament and illustration of written MSS., and is, in fact, part of caligraphy; and that art was perpetuated through miniature. Before and after the empire of Charles the Great, the distress and barbarism of Christendom had reached a point which altogether interrupted the progress of all arts save one, which was the multiplication of sacred books in the convents. Whatever the more lightly afflicted East could do in the way of mosaic pictures, that art ceased in Italy and the West; even the monks seem to have given up practising it, probably from want of appliances. But they could not cease from the labours of the scriptorium, while any sense of devotion, or ministering, or missionary spirit was left among them. Miniature was the natural relief for both writer and reader; not in the picture-loving South only, but, with various propensities and eccentricities of style, among all the higher barbarian races who had received Christianity, and who began to feel its effect in spiritual hope,

and therefore in mental development. The writing out of the Gospels could not cease while the word had to be preached. And the "letters black" were constantly varied by letters red. Minium, or red lead, was the commonest, and, as the monks made it, the most durable of pigments; and miniature derives its name accordingly. The first and simplest form of attempts at ornamenting ancient MSS. consisted in employing different coloured inks, purple, red, and so on; simply to vary the writing, and mark the first words of a book, the headings of its chapters, and even particular passages of special import. Hence the words rubric and rubricate, which are derived exactly like miniature from the new colour or its material.

There is something to be said first, or to be repeated for the sake of those who do not happen to be "up" in the subject, about ancient books, writing and illustration. Let me repeat that illumination is a late twelfth-century word at earliest, and means a particular kind of miniature. The *enlumineurs*¹ or artist writers of that time started a minor Renaissance of their own, which was sure to thrive, and did so, because it was based on careful study of nature. They worked at beautiful studies of flowers, birds, and insects; always at first using them ornamentally and in subjection to pattern, but carrying them farther in imitation of nature than had been done in any previous age. Let us also distinguish caligraphy and miniature; or rather add a remark or two to the obvious distinction that one means the writing of a MS. and the other the pictures. This is true, but a book is a work of caligraphy when its pictures are connected with the text of its writing, and are part of the whole effect of the page on which they stand. Illustrated books were plentiful from the classical ages: but they, and the first Christian works of the same kind, had their miniatures inserted in squares or oblongs wherever they were wanted; as in the Laurentian, or Rabula Evangeliary, MS. at Florence. In true caligraphic ornament, the text is so worked about the miniatures, as to combine both letters and pictures into one effect of the whole page. In all Gothic writing this is done through

¹ See Dom Guéranger, *Institutions liturgiques*, last chapter.

grandly ornamented capital letters. Perhaps one modern artist alone may be said to have revived this practice in an original way. The illustrations and ornamental writing of many of Blake's poems, executed and copied by his own hand, repeat that excellent moderation of the old scribes, who made their pictures beautiful indeed, but still subordinate to the written word. The pictures or ornaments were pretty, they thought, but the text was sacred. Yet even because the latter was chief, and the one thing needful, too much attention could not be paid to the former: and the coloured ink ornament is employed accordingly in the very earliest MSS.—as in the Alexandrine. Professor Westwood approves and adopts Dr. Scholz's division of MS. of the Holy Scripture into those of this recension, or family, and those of the Constantinopolitan, which are more strictly and faithfully copied (*Pal. Sac.* pref. vii.). As to ornament, the East was of course in advance of the West, and Dom Guéranger goes back no farther than the seventh century for the first employment of artistic design by the Latin liturgical scribes. They began it in a natural way, by enlarging and adorning their capital letters, making the writing and illustration minister equally to the effect of the whole page, not, as in early Eastern MSS., inserting the illustrations independently in squares.

But concerning ancient illustrated books. In the first place they certainly existed from the earliest period: in the second, they bore no proportion, as may be supposed, to the vast number of unornamented works, which were produced at that period, in a regular way, as by our own publishers, and perhaps in almost as large numbers as theirs. On the first point, fine Egyptian papyri exist to our own times, to show that illustration prevailed in Eastern Africa; and various Roman authors attest the same thing. Pliny mentions (*Hist. Nat.* xxv. c. 2) that physicians represented the plants they described in their works. This is very interesting, as a first or very early instance of that ministry of art to science which is now so beneficial to both of them. It was clearly the physician's object as a herbalist, when vegetable medicines were almost exclusively exhibited, that his readers or pupils should not make mistakes, or cull the wrong simple. Again, Pliny says (in

Lib. xxxv. c. 2), that Cicero praises Varro highly in his letters to Atticus for introducing the effigies or portraits, as well as the names, of about 700 illustrious persons into his works. Seneca talks of book *cum imaginibus*, in *De Tranquill. Anim.* ix. Martial says of a Virgil :—

“ Quam brevis immensum cepit membrane Maronem :
Ipsius vultus prima tabella gerit ; ”

but before going farther, there are a few words to be said on the multiplication of ordinary books in Augustan Rome, and it may certainly be supposed in Alexandria, Constantinople, Antioch, and elsewhere, for the first three Christian centuries.

There is an important essay by Professor Milligan,¹ called “The Early Christian Age.” He there explains that there may very well have been a received and authorised text of the New Testament from the earliest copies, made in large cities; because books in Augustan Rome were much cheaper and more numerous in a humble popular form than we have any idea of; or than could be believed, if we judged entirely by surviving relics of precious MSS. Only the precious ones survive: the greater number perished utterly, in the nature of things, “*sive flamma, sive mari libet Adriano*,” burnt in the conflagrations of 1,000 years of terror, or peacefully thumbed to pieces in their season, by the hands of Horace's friends, the Commons and Hermogenes Tigellius.

“We are apt to think,” says Professor Milligan, “that the precious MSS. of sacred or classical literature which now adorn the great libraries of Europe, with all their elaborate ornamentation, are but specimens of all ordinary bookmaking previous to the date at which the art of printing was invented. We forget that not one common copy of even far later times than those of our earliest MSS. survives. All have perished—perished from the frailty of the material on which they were written—from their very slowness, their cheapness, their adaptation to the multitude. The great Codices, the Sinaitic, the Vatican, the Alexandrine, and others, do not give us the slightest idea of a MS. intended for the mass of men. . . . Numerous allusions in the Roman writers about

¹ In the *Contemporary Review*, vol. x. p. 590.

the beginning of the Christian era leave no doubt that books were then multiplied with a speed, sold with a cheapness, purchased with an avidity, and sold throughout the Roman world to an extent almost incredible. The slow and expensive multiplication of books in the Middle Ages conveys to us a most incorrect idea of the speed with which they were produced, and the style in which they were issued, about the beginning of the Christian era. . . . The great means by which these ends were effected were the use of slaves, and the habit of dictation. Enter one of the large halls of a Roman publisher, and you find probably not less than one hundred slaves at work. They have all been educated and trained for the purpose. They write a swift, clear hand ; and while one dictates, one hundred copies are springing at once into existence for the great public. No sooner are the copies written than they are passed on to other workmen, ready to receive them ; and, with a speed no less astonishing than that with which they have been written, are revised, corrected, rolled up, bound, titled, and, if desirable, ornamented for the market. . . . A single bookselling firm could produce, without difficulty, in a day of ten working hours, an edition of the second book of Martial, consisting of a thousand copies.”¹

These rapidly-written books, on papyrus or linen for the most part, would not be ornamented with miniatures, or work of any degree of skill ; and that age did not rejoice in any of those contrivances for mechanical multiplication of ornament and picture, which produce such vast and dubious effects on the arts of our own time and country. We hear of cheap books in Rome, but not of cheap illustrated books. Fresco stood instead of book illustration for the many. As has been said in our sketch of ancient painting, D’Agincourt’s *Histoire des Monuments*, &c., will give a tolerable notion, though in scantily-shaded outline, of decorative paintings, and even of highly finished pictures, such as the classical Augustan or primitive age was accustomed to. Mr. Parker’s Pompeian photographs of wall-painting, those from the Villa Doria Pamphili, and especially those from the tomb of Statilius

¹ On this subject Prof. Mahaffy refers to Dr. W. Adolph Schmidt’s *Geschichte der Denk und Glaubensfreiheit*.

Taurus, will give anybody who knows anything of drawing or colour, or who is anything of a critical student of pictures, a good idea of the actual present condition of ancient work, of its merits and demerits, and even of the methods and system on which it was done. Gell's and Dyer's books on Pompeii are accessible. The celebrated "Aldobrandini Wedding" is figured in D'Agincourt (*Peinture*, pl. xxvi.) and the same plate gives a capital illustration of the transition or decadence from quasi-Attic art to Byzantine, which may be said to have taken place between the last days of Pompeii and the sixth century. As in sculpture, so in painting. The very pretty and well-known subject of the lady painter in her atelier (plate xxvi.) is of the earlier date, and with it is a meritorious, but awkward, representation from the Vienna MS. of Dioscorides (of the latter of the two periods). It was written for the Empress Juliana Anicia, and represents a naturalist painter or illustrator of books, depicting a root of mandragora, which "Nature" or "Invention" holds up for him. The mandrake at least is unmistakable, almost a "screaming" likeness. There are also pictures of a stag's head, very well done; of a viper and viperess; of a BOABOC, or onion, done with the "feeling" of one who loved garlic; of the Phœnician asp, much distended (the puff-adder very possibly), and of a peacock with half a tail.

Other extant examples of the most ancient MSS. of classical times are as follows. They are illustrated by small square drawings let into the text, without any ornamental adjuncts. The Roman Calendar in the Imperial Library at Vienna, with eight allegorical figures of the months, each about eight inches high, beautifully drawn in fine drapery: supposed to have been executed in the reign of Constantine, son of Constantine the Great. The famous purple vellum Greek Codex Geneseos, with forty-eight miniatures; and the Dioscorides of Juliana Anicia, of which Lambecius gave a series of fac-similes, in nine folio plates. These are all at Vienna. The earlier Vatican Virgil is full of miniatures, and possibly of Constantine's time. Another MS. of Virgil, belonging to the Vatican, is still at Paris, I believe; it is in fine rustic capitals, and is referred by most authors to the fourth

or fifth century, though D'Agincourt quite wrongly places it in the twelfth or thirteenth, from the rudeness of the drawings. Besides its writing, its pictures are all rectangular; and it has important relations (to judge by D'Agincourt's copies of both) with the other or unquestioned fifth century Virgil. All the eyes in both goggle similarly, like comic masks; the artist's notion of a cave is the same in both; Dido's Amazonian pelta or shield, and the evidently Barb character of the horses in the Paris MS., are features far beyond a twelfth century scribe. He would have clad Æneas in a mail hauberk and pointed basnet, as the delightful artist of the *Combat of Theodoric and Odovakar* has done (D'Agincourt, *Peinture*, plates xx.—xxv., lxiv. and lxvii.). The storm in *Æneid* vi. is represented at plate lxiv., with a felicity quite beyond my powers of verbal description. Dido's evidently principal share in the love-making, Æneas's calm irresolution, the prudent attendant outside who has turned his round shield into an umbrella; the cheerful composure of the other in the Phrygian cap, and the hydraulic energy of the rain, which is coming down evidently under a sense of special mission—are very far beyond any praise I can bestow upon them. There is part of a very early *Iliad* in the Ambrosian Library at Milan, its miniatures not yet published: and the famous Syriac *Evangelary* of Rabula, sixth century, will have to be referred to more than once again. In our own country we have the Cottonian *Book of Genesis*, probably fourth century; the Augustinian *Gospels*, with miniatures, probably of the sixth, and the Golden Greek *Canons* (Brit. Mus. Additional No. 5111).

From the sixth to the beginning of the ninth century there was certainly a great falling off in elegance and classic design, as indeed in energy and vigour of working. Indeed, not very many MSS. can be found which are certainly identifiable as belonging to that date. The art of caligraphy flagged, like all others, even in the cloister, and more so on the continent than in England and Ireland. For though in the ninth century the Celtic transcribers lost all sense of beauty, in some cases failing even in their eye for colour, it was in their convents and those of Northumbria that the traditions of MS.

ornament and its skilful *technique* were preserved for Alfred and Charlemagne.

The historical importance of the study of miniature is like that of any other branch of fine art. It is of course one of the best means of tracing the classical, or Græco-Roman, influence on the Northern spirit, to observe its derivative styles of art, Byzantine, Romanesque, or barbaric. And much miniature points to a genuine religious feeling, which often led its professors into the higher spheres of fine art, when they came to work out subjects in which they earnestly believed. Their intense interest in their work often gives them great vigour of imagination; and they often seem to have a feeling of teaching by picture, and that they were not only adorning but explaining their text. Anybody who is beginning to read illustrated MSS. in various hands and of various periods, will soon see how the pithy pictures express the meaning of the text and help him with the leading idea. He will be so much the better able to enter into the mind of Alfred, beginning to learn to read because the pictures were so pretty (pp. 7-8, ed. *Walsingham*), as Asser says he did, or of Charles the Great turning his sword-hand to attempts at illumination. He did not get on quite as he wished, says Eginhard, "Tentabat et scribere, tabulasque et codicillos ad hoc in lectulos sub cervicalibus circumferre solebat, ut cum vacuum tempus esset, manum effingendis literis assuefaceret. Sed parum prospere successit labor præposterus et sero inchoatus."

I don't think "lectulus" can mean a litter here: the Kaiser could hardly have made use of that sort of thing. It must mean his camp-bed, and I dare say the *codicilli* and *tabulæ*, slates and copybooks, may have been rolled up under the pillow of that necessary piece of furniture. But he did not get on well—the work was "preposterous" or no use, and too late begun. Well, if he could not write himself, he has been the cause of much writing in others.* I presume that

* He is said (see *Palagrapbia Sacra* on his *Evangelistarium*) to have corrected many MSS. with his own hand; and the Benedictines say such a MS. of Origen's commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, with Charlemagne's writing, is still preserved in the Bibliothèque de l'Empereur.

Eginhard means he could not learn to do fine spirals or polychrome interlacings : and if that be all, he is no worse than a late justly distinguished member of our own Royal Academy, who despairingly gave up the intolerable toil and eye-strain of copying the Irish convolutions of the Book of Kells. Anybody who can get a sight of that, or of Professor Westwood's renderings of its interlaced patterns, will see that the backslider was not much to blame. Nothing but specially trained hands and eyes can reproduce the terrific intricacies of the Hibernian and Northumbrian scribehood : and nothing but sedentary enthusiasm, and the concentration of all the energies of life into one quiet channel, could ever have done them at first. They are not high art, but wonderful ornament. How we all talk about artists and amateurs ; and how the truly British taste for snubbing, or the infliction of petty mortification, thrives on the use of the latter epithet ! This ornament is amateur work : first, because the man who did it loved and revered his work, as a scribe of the Gospel of Christ ; secondly, because he got no money for doing it, only the spare means of hard existence ; thirdly, because no professional artist either could or would do it at all.

At all events, if Alfred and Charlemagne could not paint, they could read ; and they found the pictures of great use in reading ; and so, no doubt, did kings and queens, and knights and ladies in after days till the invention of printing. Varied hands and styles of writing must have given a good deal of trouble at all times, and increasingly so towards the end of the Middle Ages. What is more, the feeling of the artist, or in other words, his earnest desire to express his thought, must have had at least considerable effect through the pictures. We recognise it at once in pictures just as rude ; sometimes we read all kinds of beauties of feeling into what may seem to others simply barbarous and feeble work. But the way to all Teutonic styles of religious painting, and in great measure, to all our naturalist work, was prepared and determined by early monk-artists, who preached the Scriptures in form and colour. One can see how Giotto repeats the pithy daring of the miniaturists, in his defined conception

of events as they were. In Italy, this progress is traceable from him to Orcagna and the Sienese school, and into the life of Angelico, who began his work with missal-painting. It seems as if many miniaturists north of the Alps may have turned aside into glass-painting, or again towards sculpture ; or, with the " little " masters of engraving, to the various processes denoted by that name.

Anyhow the sense of religious duty, and in fact the preaching spirit of the Gospel, must have been no small part of the mind of the true scribe ; he could not have done what he did unless his work had been truly great and glorious to him by reason of its subject. In writing, as in decorating, his text and task were hallowed to him. Dom Guéranger¹ dwells with justice on the devoted care with which the holy books were transcribed and edited. The MSS., when completed in the Scriptoria, were corrected under the care of bishops and abbots ; who either took special care as to the re-censors they employed, or did the work themselves. The copyists would have held it sacrilege to depart in any degree from the words given them to reproduce. It certainly was so until and during the time of Charlemagne : and with him, on the Continent, began a season of special exertion and splendour in multiplying and adorning Evangelaries, Psalters, and Sacramentaries, which were often destined for presents to his Bishops for the use of their dioceses.²

There is no doubt that the Continental or Carolingian school of the ninth century received much instruction in the first place, and direction for long afterwards, from English, Northumbrian, or Irish sources. But the English scribes and artists had unquestionably learnt much from Italy, in particular from the mosaic-pictures of Rome or Ravenna. And when their caligraphy came back, with interest as it were, to help instruct the Western Church under the Western Empire, it developed greatly in its charge and under its new

¹ *Institutions Liturgiques*, vol. iii., last ch.

² Kräger, *De Liturgia*, p. 224, quotes the *Capitulary* 62, lib. i. thus :—
"Caroli M. Imperatoris. &c. ita statuit, Pueros vestros non sinatis eos vel legendo vel scribendo corrumpere : et si opus est Evangelium vel Psalterium et Missale scribere, perfectæ ætatis homines scribant cum omni diligentia."

patronage. And still more than that, it came in contact once more with the recommencing study of nature herself. It was of incalculable value for art and literature, as for law and civilisation, that the Gothic or Northern world should go back to classical models: and that men should at least understand a part of their inheritance of Græco-Roman knowledge. In art it was specially important; but if anything could be more auspicious still, it was that the study of nature itself began to run parallel to, or even to coincide with, the student's eager acceptance of classical models and discipline, in drawing and composition, in idea and *technique*. Two great men mark this true early Renaissance or rejuvenescence of graphic art, Niccola Pisano and Giotto. The first represents not only the return to old Greek models like the Chase of Meleager, but the method of studying from nature as old Greeks had done. The second is the first great naturalist or realist, in aim and often by successful execution. Both had learnt what they could from the new Greek or Byzantine style. Giotto's draperies, and his often conventional treatment of landscape and background, are partly inherited from them through Cimabue's teaching. Niccola worked with or under the Greek decorators of the Cathedral of Pisa. But both alike broke away from traditional repetitions of the same treatment, and from stereotyped symbolism. Both shook off the passive and incurious habit of the ascetic, who suspected nature and her beauty, and preferred to copy typical features over and over again, and to cover his backgrounds with interlacings or spirals, or perhaps in the south and east, with lozenges and zigzags and forgotten fragments of ancient patterns. Both Saxon and Irish MSS. came to this in great degree by the tenth or early eleventh century; and the great Etrurian Renaissance was needed to awaken all the arts at once in search of nature their mother. But even as early as the time of Charles the Great, there are decided traces of study of the real thing: in the birds of his purple Evangelistarium, and the animals of the Alcuin Bible of the British Museum, and not a little in such realistic pictures as that of the Fall, in the same MS. The old rigidity is over, and historical record of events as they happened, and things

as they are, begins to be attempted. Adam and Eve shall no longer stand stolid in carving, or grim in mosaic, to hear the curse on the world: they shall look ashamed and distressed, they shall know that they are naked; so Alcuin's painter would have it; and in so doing he anticipated the distant Giotto, and worked in his spirit and Pisano's. To acknowledge the world and its beauty was a worthy subject of art, and to admit it into sacred books, in text and ornaments, was in fact and in principle to give up the ascetic view of the world. The Irish scribes would not work from nature at all, and went on spinning intricate spirals out of their own brains till they lost their wits. The English of the tenth and eleventh centuries would look at nature only a little—and they lost the graphic power in conventional attenuation, tedious fluttering of draperies, and perpetual imagery of serpents like endless ribbons, and lizards like nothing at all.

But there are a few more terms to explain before we plunge finally into *Palæographia Sacra* and Count Bastard; and a great many of them are awful words indeed. The Benedictine editors indulge in very natural, and really not ill-founded vituperation at the truculent and doleful imageries (imaginations atroces et mélancoliques) of the English scribes: but really their terminology has words in it as long as Saxon serpents or Irish scrolls. The Gospels of Louis le Débonnaire in Paris, and of Bishop Leofric in the Bodleian Library, are good examples (*Pal. Sac.* p. xii. Introd.) of letters formed of contorted figures of animals, and their monastic names are contorted too. Anthropomorphic of men, zoomorphic of animals; ichthyomorphic, ophiomorphic, ornithoid, anthophylloid¹—the last means composed of leaves and flowers, and the others are intelligible, when one has spelt them.

The large, fine rounded characters, in which the most ancient Greek and Roman MSS. are written, are called uncials. Some are written in square capitals: a capital letter means one at the beginning of a capitulum or chapter. Narrower capitals, more hastily written, and with the tops and bottoms of the big letters obliquely cut off, are called

¹ *Nouveau Traité de Diplomatique*, ii. plate 19, and 117-120.

rustic: and smaller uncials and rustics were of course in general use, and the latter continued till the tenth or eleventh century. In fact Professor Westwood seems certain not only that a running or cursive hand had been practised from far earlier times, but that, when slowly and carefully written, it became the Minuscular or "small" alphabet.


The whole subject of MS. and miniature is called the *Res Diplomatica*, by the Benedictines; Mabillon being in fact the first author who set it on a firm basis in his treatise, so named. He was followed by two of his later brethren, Doms Toustain and Tessin, who published the *Nouveau Traité de Diplomatique* in 1784. The word means, that which has to do with deciphering diplomas, treaties, original MSS. or important ancient documents of any kind; and diploma (*διπλωμα*) is a Græco-Latin word meaning a doubled-up paper: perhaps in the ordinary use of the word it may mean a paper with a double meaning, and diplomacy may mean duplicity by etymological derivation, as well as in its practical operations.¹

Then we come to purple MSS., and to chrysographs. I do not think the word argyrophylax is used. There are very few MSS. in silver writing: but the ground on which they and many golden-lettered codices are written is generally purple or azure, and the names go accordingly. In the old Imperial times it was an instance of Roman splendour to write MSS. for the use of the sovereign on vellum stained Tyrian or Imperial purple. The letters were in gold, and they were called chrysographs accordingly: and sometimes they were in silver, or silver and gold were used together. Both luxury and art died away after the taking of Rome in 410; but in the temporary revival under Charles the Great the ancient pomp of Imperial purple Gospels and Psalters was renewed. There is a fine one in the Bodleian Library, with whole page miniatures, considered to be as late as the eleventh century, and I saw a similar one in the Remonstrants' Convent at Prague; but the purple and gold are generally considered rich enough without pictures. The first purple MS. on record is said by

¹ "Diptych," two-fold, means a double tablet, in the same way; a pair of waxed boards for writing, not a permanent document like diploma.

Guéranger to have been a Homer, given to Maximin the younger by his mother.

The Evangeliary of Ulfilas (died 388) is perhaps the most important of all the still remaining MSS. on purple vellum and in gold and silver writing. Ulfilas or Vulfilas, the Wulfling or young chief of the Ostrogoths, embalmed the letters of his race in his version of the Bible. It is called the *Codex Argenteus*, from its far-famed silver binding, and is now in the Library of the University of Upsal, and one of the most renowned MSS. in the world. The curious discovery was made by three councillors and professors, that the letters in it have not been written, but produced by some kind of stencilling process—an early approach to the art of printing. They are fine uncials. It was found in the sixteenth century at the monastery of Werden, near Cologne, and went to Upsal about 1655. With those of Brescia, Verona and Perugia, the Psalters of S. Germain des Prés and Zurich, &c., it is referred to the sixth century. Other very ancient works are the Greek Evangeliary of S. John de Carbonara at Naples, now at Vienna, eighth century; the Antiphonary of S. Gregory at Monza, once the property of the renowned Queen Theodolinda; and Charlemagne's Gospels, still at Aix la Chapelle and at Abbéville. The purple pages are economised more or less in his time, as in a Psalter now at Vienna, presented to Adrian VIII.; the Evangeliaries of that time are still purple throughout, but in the tenth century the use of that colour may be said to go out altogether, except for such rare examples as the Bodleian and the Prague Evangeliaries. Of white vellum chrysographs, gold or silver, the Evangeliaries of S. Martin des Champs, S. Medard of Soissons, and of the Ratisbon Monastery of St. Emméran are specially admired by Guéranger; and the two former are beautifully illustrated in Count Bastard's first volume. One cannot help regretting the decline of splendour in pure caligraphy from the eighth century; but we may be something more than consoled by feeling that miniature begins to run parallel with it at that time, and gradually and healthily takes its place. The Missale Francorum is an instance; so is the beautiful



"Sacramentaire de Gellone" in Count Bastard. It contains a miniature of the Crucifixion in the Canon of the Mass, the cross forming the T in the words *Te igitur*. Here also the Mass of the Invention of the Cross has in its initial letter the figure of a man squaring a tree-trunk; as it were to form the upright limb. In fact, as may be supposed, figure-miniature of the Western Church begins with the initials. Sometimes they amount to whole page illuminations, as of the four Evangelists in the Hours of Charlemagne (Count Bastard, *Peintures des Manuscrits*, vol. ii.). Lange's remark confirms what has been said—that the labours of the later miniaturists, who worked from nature, gave originality and confidence to the rising efforts of fresco and panel painters, who very commonly began with MS. decoration.

But for examples and evidence of the classical or Græco-Roman connection between east, west and north. This is one of the links or writing transitions of history, which are quite as important to understand as its distinctions, and more difficult. It is easy to distinguish Greek from Roman, or Gothic, or Renaissance, or perhaps any of them from the other; but when one comes to compare Byzantine and Romanesque, one finds that the common origin of those styles in the Eastern and Western Empire, is a fact of more consequence, even than such distinctions as the higher or lower-pitched roof, and the northern tendency to the grotesque. The important point for the illuminators was that from the time of the Pisan Renaissance, and in some degree from that of Charles the Great, the study of classical models was combined with the study of nature. The Irish never practised either; they were devout caligraphists and not artists; their mission was to keep up the traditions of ornament and the skilful use of colour from S. Patrick, or at least from S. Columba; and by their intense devotion to their work, to edify the southern monasteries, with the true spirit of the scribe well instructed. Though their school gave way and vanished, it is probably from their strong taste for pattern, and insistence on capital letters in particular, that the later schools were all truly caligraphic as well as artistic, and the Carolingian miniature was rightly subjected to writing. There is a tendency among us

either to forget all that is due to Rome, or to ignore any Christianity not traceable through Rome; but it cannot be denied at least that there was an Irish, Scottish, or Celtic church before Augustine came to England. There is no doubt about the Synod of Verulam and its condemnation of Pelagius in 429, with the help of the Bishops of Lyons. S. Patrick was a real person, and his work real work, ending 465 A.D.¹ From his time to S. Columba's, at Iona, in 563, is a period of blackness of darkness in Southern Europe; during which it seems hardly too much to say that the Christian faith was preserved and renewed by the Irish Church. No one denies S. Aidan's mission to Oswald of Northumbria, or the foundation of Lindisfarne in 635, or that he declined connection with the Gregorian missionaries; or that his presence on Holy Island sustained the Christianity which Penda's defeat of Eadwine had almost destroyed.²

"It was not the Church of Paulinus which nerved Oswald to this struggle for the cross. Paulinus had fled from Northumbria at Eadwine's fall, and the Roman Church in Kent shrank into inactivity before the heathen reaction. Its place in the conversion of England was taken by missionaries from Ireland. . . . Christianity had been received there with a burst of popular enthusiasm; and letters and arts sprang up rapidly in its train. While the vigour of Christianity in Italy and Gaul and Spain was exhausted in a bare struggle for life, Ireland, unscourged by invaders, drew from its conversion an energy such as it has never known since. The science of biblical knowledge which fled from the continent took refuge in famous schools, which made Durrow and Armagh the universities of the West. Patrick, the first missionary of the island, had not been half a century dead, when Irish Christianity threw itself with a fiery zeal into battle with the mass of heathenism which was rolling in upon the Christian world. Irish missionaries laboured among the Picts of the Highlands and the Frisians of the Northern

¹ About two years after Theodoric had been sent from the Danube to Constantinople—eleven after the voice by night had told the Emperor that the bow of Attila was broken.

² See Green's *History of the English People*, ch. iii., "The Heathen Struggle."

Seas. An Irish missionary—Columban—founded monasteries in Burgundy and the Apennines. The Canton of S. Gall still commemorates in its name another Irish missionary, before whom the spirits of flood and fell fled wailing over the Lake of Constance. For a time it seemed as if the older race that Roman and German had swept before them had turned to the moral conquest of their conquerors; as if Celtic and not Latin Christianity was to mould the destinies of the churches of the West."

It was part of the work, then, and a means of the success of this Scoto-Irish Church, between Armagh, Iona, and Lindisfarne, to carry out caligraphic ornamentation as pure decoration of colour and intricate line, without reference to nature. Its first characteristic is superabundant use of plaited work. This might be comfortably enough traced to Irish or British wicker-work—it is unquestionably thus connected—and so accounted for, if it were not universally used, north, south, east, west, and at all dates.¹ Westwood gives a specimen of it from an Arabic MS. in *Palæographiæ Sacra*; the universal guilloche pattern represents it; it is to be seen in Professor Ruskin's Byzantine capitals (*Stones of Venice*, vol. ii. pp. 131–2, pls. vii. viii.), and it may be, as he says, in its eastern form, a remembrance of the chequer and braided work of the Temple of Solomon. It does not occur in the Babula MS., which contains chevrons, lozenges, zigzags, flowers, fruit, and birds. Its wonderful development is common to both English and Irish ornament, but the latter sacrifices

¹ It must be remembered that in early ecclesiastical record the word *Scotus* means Irishman, in which sense it was applied to Erigena. There are two striking passages, from Tertullian and Chrysostom, which must refer to some beginnings of the Irish Church. The first is from the African Father's tract, *Adversus Judæos*, chap. vii., where he certainly speaks (circ. A.D. 200) to the effect that "parts of Britain which had not been reached by the Romans had been subdued to Christ." (*Britannorum inaccessa Romani loca, Christo vero subdita.*) Chrysostom says distinctly: "Even the Britannic Isles, that lie beyond this (Mediterranean) sea, in the ocean itself, have felt the power of the Word: for therein are churches, and altars of the Holy Sacrifice are set up." *Ὅτι θεός ὁ Χριστός*, Op. Savile, t. vii. p. 635.

² It is found in the interior of S. Clemente at Rome. A dado of the upper story is in interlaced carving just like a hurdle. So given, at any rate, in D'Agincourt, *Translation*, vol. i. plate xvi. No. 11. He refers to Montfaucon, *Diarium Italicum*, p. 134.

everything to complexity of pattern, and the former acquires or retains naturalism enough to survive into the Middle Ages. There is a great gift of colour perceptible in the strange miniatures of the Book of Kells, where Scriptural subject is attempted, and not without power; but with a quaintness which marks the work of an isolated church which owed Rome nothing, and had learnt nothing of Greece or Syria but the faith. He who gave the word for knowledge gave also the book of nature for ornament; and in the latter the Irish monk will not read. He still desires to represent the facts of the faith and symbolism of the Church; but he has forgotten in his scriptorium what any man or thing is like. The crucifixion at the beginning of the Psalter of S. John's College, Cambridge, with attendant angels—or possibly sun and moon—is an interesting and mournful example of decay in the intellectual energies of a Church to which such great work had been committed, and which had done it so faithfully. And in this last work the colours are ill opposed, whereas the deep blues, greens, and purples of the Book of Kells, and the azure and green in the MS. of Brith MacDurman are very beautiful, and best paralleled, I think, in some Ravenna mosaics (as the roof of Galla Placidia's Chapel). This consideration may confirm the idea of Professor Westwood, that much knowledge of ornament was obtained for the north in very early times (say from the latter half of the fifth century), by English and Irish pilgrims, who saw the first splendour of the great mosaics, and tried, not in vain, to reproduce the play of tessellated colour in the sacred writing which so delighted their souls. This would account for the Byzantine appearance of much northern work, and for the continual use of dots, bands, and zigzags, combined with all inconceivable lacertine or ophidian forms, which frequently border on the diabolical, though probably without any meaning of that kind. This may probably be the earliest form of the northern grotesque found in aimless or excited play of invention; and would date a century earlier than the Lombard extravagances of S. Michele of Pavia. But the Lombard fancy, like the Carolingian, was willing to seek material by the study of nature.

The Book of Durrow is the most interesting of Irish,

perhaps of all, MSS. It is otherwise called the Gospel of S. Columba, and described at the beginning of this book.

The epigraphs, and even the bindings of many MSS., are an interesting subject of themselves; some of them must be given at the end of this chapter. But we must leave the Irish MSS. here, and refer to such English ones as show relation to the great continental works of the same kind. As we said, Alcuin and his English teachers were in a position to instruct the court of Charlemagne in this and other matters at first; but such progress was made during his reign at Aachen and elsewhere, by the study of classical examples, and from nature as well, that the great Carolingian MSS. excel all others of their time. The Anglo-Saxon was satisfied if he conveyed his idea; and definite and strong enough as it generally was, a little quaintness was natural to him. Thus in the Augustinian Psalter (*Palæographia Sacra*) David, Asaph, and Heman are represented conducting Hebrew psalmody with the help of the long northern horn and psaltery; aided by timed clapping of hands, as it seems by the gestures of their excited choir; and one of the most irresistible drawings in the world is the celebrated organ and performers at the end of the Utrecht Psalter, where the blowers are over-exerting themselves, apparently without proper results; and the players look with some indignation for larger supplies of wind.—“*Aura, Veni.*”¹

Now Professor Westwood asserts a connection—which most draughtsmen will think evident, and which is more probable because observed by one of the most minute and accurate

¹ One great class of grotesques so called, are pictures of subjects which are beyond the powers of man to represent literally, but which he can nevertheless recall in a very striking manner to the minds of his spectators, by imaginative conventionalisms, or symbols of his own. As Professor Ruskin says, pictures of Joseph's or Pharaoh's dreams, and most Apocalyptic subjects, are in fact grotesques. So is Raphael's *Vision of Ezekiel*; but at the other end of the scale of technical power, the following pictures may be named from the great Cottonian copy of Ælfric's *Heptateuch* (British Museum, Claudius, 6. iv., date about A.D. 1005):—God upheld by angels in the oval vesica; Downfall of the rebel angels (devoured by a great red serpent); Creation, many subjects; Expulsion from Paradise; Translation of Enoch; The first rainbow; Vineyard and winepress; Tower of Babel; Abraham and five kings (Abraham crowned, and clad in the ringed mail or *byrn*); Appearance of God to Abraham on a ladder and with angels; Journey of Abraham and Isaac, and interrupted sacrifice; Lot and his wife led by angels; Deceit of Jacob; his dream; the ark, &c.

draughtsmen in the world—between the Augustinian MSS. those of Athelstan and Alcuin, Count Vivien's great Bible of Charles the Bold, the Vatican Bible of S. Paul, the Vatican Virgil, and the Syriac, Florentine, or Rabula's Evangeliary. This must have its value for all students of history, whether they care for art or not; because it shows not only that the Northern world received instruction at and through Rome, but that they and Rome also obtained their knowledge from Greece and from the East. The Græco-Roman or classical element is common to all these works. Rabula is like Athelstan or Alcuin. "The very peculiar and common pattern," says Westwood, "found in Irish or Anglo-Saxon MSS. formed of several spiral lines united in the centre of a circle, with the ends dilated, is evidently identical, on a smaller scale, with the pattern employed by the Syriac artist of the Miracle of the Pool of Bethesda, to represent the waves of the pool. These apparently trifling circumstances seem to prove, more forcibly than more laborious arguments, the connection between the early Christians in these islands and those of the East, so strongly insisted on by various writers." (See *Pal. Sac.* pl. vi.) Some of these drawings are of the dark age of Græco-Roman work, it is true. Such conventional grace or study of nature as they have is Greek-taught; but there certainly is not much of the latter, and beauty departs from the figures accordingly. They all have the goggle-eyes of the decadence. No artist, it seems, for whole generations, monk or other, cared from generation to generation, to look at his neighbour's eye, and see that its pupil is naturally half hidden between the lids. Kings and archbishops sit on curule chairs in Carolingian MSS., as in the bas-reliefs of ancient days; with cats not unfrequently in the act of contemplating them.¹ But if the cats really used their immemorial privilege, and looked at the successors of Charlemagne, it seems to be more than their painters did; at them, or their chairs, or their

¹ The celebrated Utrecht Psalter, however it came into the hands of its present holders, unquestionably belongs to our own Cottonian collection. Whoever its scribe or scribes may have been, there can be no doubt that he, or they, or one or more of them, had seen Italy and Rome. There are some of the classical objects in it from Prof. Westwood's list, duly verified by ourselves from the photograph copy in the Bodleian. A circular temple and oblong basilica,

attitude, or anything that was theirs. The pictures record a similar, in fact a typical protrusion of knees and elbows, and generally a convulsive uneasiness about the feet; but they seldom seem to include character or likeness. Not but that portraits are attempted in ancient caligraphy, and done very like, and very facetious—remarkably so. In Smith's *Dictionary of Antiquities*, s.v. Grotesque, p. 752, there is a feeble rendering in woodcut of the head of a monk physician of the eighth century, from a MS. of the medical works of Orbaces and Alexander of Tralles, whoever they were; and Dioscorides, of whom we have heard before. It is drawn quite freely with the pen, and will be found in coloured *facsimile* in Count Bastard's first volume (*Peintures de Manuscrits*, &c.). The whole MS. is in what the Count calls *lettres à jour*, or large handsome letters drawn in outline; and the portrait is "that" characteristic, that if the sitter were restored to life, and one of a large assembled chapter of his order, any ordinary reader might identify and choose him out of it. It is said of Lord Chancellor Thurlow, that he once sent his servant into a full coffee-house to find and call out "a man particularly like the knave of clubs," and that his servant went in and brought out the right person. He must have borne considerable resemblance to the portrait in question, which is one of the greatest triumphs of pure caligraphy with which I am acquainted. It is curious how genuine skill wins favour in everything. Though one cannot help feeling that study of nature is the soul of fine art, still the old penman had a perfect hand, and did it justice; and there is something to admire and enjoy in that happy narrowness which made him content to write firmly, flourish in severe curve, and draw his grotesques in clear and perfect line.

For any one who has the opportunity, it is well worth the trouble to consult d'Agincourt, Count Bastard, and Professor Westwood, so as to get an idea of the earliest Classical

frontispiece: ditto, Ps. li ad fin, and Ps. lxxviii.; temple, signs of the zodiac, sun and moon, Ps. lxxviii. Atlas, Ps. lxxxii., with the Hebrew Temple as an oblong peristyle; river gods or Tritons, blowing long trumpets, Ps. xcii.; boats with steering oars, and broad-tiled buildings, *passim*.

Eastern, English so-called, and Carolingian work. The term English includes Irish, Northumbrian, and Anglo-Saxon. Eastern means Ruthenian and Bulgarian as well as actually Oriental, and the Classical or Græco-Roman element is in all, and the substratum of all. The whole *technique* of caligraphy was preserved in religious houses, no subject was treated except religious subjects, and all the artists were monks; so that all the MSS. have a kind of cosmopolitan stamp of the monastery and the pilgrimage; Rabula is like Columba, the English draughtsman of the Augustinian Psalter is like both, Count Vivien is like them all.

We do not know what the work of Methodius and Cyril may have been like. These painter brothers represent the conversion of Bulgaria and Bohemia to some reality of Christianity, independent of the Latin Church, or not wholly dependent on the court of Rome. No doubt is expressed of the story of Methodius's conversion of Bogoris, King of Bulgaria, by painting a picture of the *Last Judgment*, or that Cyril and he invented the Slavonian alphabet, or translated the Holy Scriptures into that language.¹ Grim and barbaric these pictures must have been, and perhaps they are no very great loss to art; but they must have borne the Eastern or Byzantine stamp. The Ruthenian MSS., such as are left us, are wild and harsh, and bear the same relation to Carolingian work which the Diptych of Rambona does to Lombard carving; that is to say, they are entirely barbarous, without sign or promise of progress in studying nature; and also, without much remaining trace of classical traditions.

Methodius, like Theodore of Tarsus, seems to have been one of those zealous labourers of the Eastern Church who supplied the energies and veiled the corruption of the darkest centuries of the Western. But, like Paulinus of Nola before him, he seems to have understood the use of picture language for instruction of converts, whose speech he did not know well; at all events, in a time of depravity and distress, when Mohammedanism was gaining fast on Christianity in the East, he seems to have established new

¹ For Cyrillian character and illumination, see Slavonic MSS. in *Pa'ug. Sacra*. The character, originally Greek, is now modified into Russian.

outworks, perhaps gained new realms in the West. His life extends over the ninth century; he may have had the great fame of the Carolingian power in the West to back him, with such wild catechumens as Bogoris; or perhaps the whole energy of the Eastern Church was driven inwards to his help; at all events his work lasted longer than the empire of the Karlings, and stood through the terrors of the later ninth century. Whatever tone we choose to adopt towards the Church of the East, she has endured through the despair of that age, the desolations of the third crusade, the ruin of 1453, and what she has been she remains—the orthodox creed of exhausted races.

For in the year 888, with the unworthy rule of Charles the Fat, the empire of Charles the Great came to an end. One man alone could have sustained the great order he had made out of ruin, and to ruin it returned once more. He had wept in his last days to see the Northern sea-dragons in the Mediterranean, foreknowing as he did the fresh inroads of barbarism from the East.

“That time,” says Mr. Bryce,¹ “was indeed the nadir of order and civilisation. From all sides the torrent of barbarism, which Charles the Great had stemmed, came rushing down upon his empire. The Saracen wasted the Mediterranean coasts, and sacked Rome itself. The Dane and Norseman swept the Atlantic and the North Seas, and pierced France and Germany by their rivers, burning, slaying, carrying into captivity; pouring through the Straits of Gibraltar, they fell upon Provence and Italy. By land, while Wends and Czechs and Obotrites threw off the German yoke and threatened the borders, the wild bands, pressing in from the steppes of the Caspian, dashed over Germany like the flying spray of a new wave of barbarians, and carried the terror of their battleaxes to the Apennines and the sea. Under such strokes the already loosened fabric swiftly dissolved. No one thought of common defence or wide organisation. The strong built castles; the weak became their bondsmen, or took shelter under the cowl; the governor, count, or abbot tightened his grasp, turned a delegated into

¹ *Holy Roman Empire*, p. 87.

an independent, a personal into a territorial sovereignty, and hardly owned a distant and feeble suzerain. The grand vision of a universal Christian Empire was utterly lost amid the isolation, the antagonism, the increasing localisation of all powers ; it might seem but a passing gleam from an older and better world."

No doubt it did seem so. Had any man then lived who knew what the old Pax Romana had been, and how Rome kept order all round the Mediterranean and in Gaul and Britain, the state of things in the ninth century would have distressed him all the more. The distresses of Europe in those days were not less probably than in those of Attila ; but every country had been reinforced with strong blood and fierce races, who could make desperate stand against the invading hordes. Castles and the feudal system at all events organised the defence of civilisation, or whatever condition of things stood for it ; and the same object was far better carried out by Henry the Fowler's system of walled towns with special burgher privileges and compulsory residence of a certain number of burghers (every ninth man) as garrison ; exactly as in a Roman Colonia of the Republic. As to art, one thing seems to me but little noticed to have had considerable effect on it for good—the Benedictine rule of open-air labour. I should think that this must have been the origin of the naturalism of the first enlumineurs. They or their brethren were obliged not only to read and think, but to grow corn and dress vines. The same wholesome country life which had delighted the Athenian citizen, comforted the weary monk ; and human beauty being forbidden ground to him, he fell to work at vegetation, animals, and insects ; and various forms of the higher grotesque. Anybody can see, with very little study of such copies of the works as we can get, the difference between Rabula and the Carolingian Sacramentaire de Gellone. The Syrian is full of devotion, and has a powerful and creative imagination, which possesses him with definite conception of the actuality of his subject. He has a picture in his head, like the Lombard carver of the Griffin in *Modern Painters* (iii. p. 106, part iv. ch. viii.). He has his inner sight of what the fact was like, or of what

manner of spectacle the vision or miracle appeared to men's eyes. His Crucifixion is like one of the German mediæval ones, containing all the details at one moment, the spear, the sponge, the Blessed Virgin and S. John, the game of Mora, for casting of lots.¹ His Chariot of the Ascension is a grand ideal combination of the *Zôa*, the fourfold creatures of the Apocalypse, of the cherubic vision of Ezekiel, and of the cloud or glory of upbearing angels. He shows a certain fondness for birds in his border decoration. But evidently he has not studied from nature, or looked much at her; and the Carolingian scribes, inferior to him perhaps in devotion, certainly in power of aspiration and height of soar, have here and there the advantage of having enjoyed and followed natural forms. The Benedictines were a working out-door order, and saw green fields and forests not in vain. One of the best examples, *i.e.* the most reliable and accessible copy of one of their best works in early study of nature, is the cyclamen, root and flower, given in *Modern Painters* (iii. p. 208, or part iv. c. 14). It is thirteenth century, but it shows the quiet gradual progress of naturalism, and should be compared with the Giottesque and other free-drawing at vol. iv. p. 16, part v. c. 5. This is no doubt a later stage, but I cannot help thinking one sees the first steps in the Sacramentary, and other Frank miniatures.

Professor Westwood assigns the middle of the ninth century as the first period of evident influence of the schools of Charles the Great on the productions of English scriptoria. Many Frank schools were presided over by Alcuin and other learned Englishmen; but their success came home again and had its influence, and on both sides the Channel men were led to natural study, and at the same time to higher appreciation of classical art. This led in Italy to Niccola Pisano and the Renaissance, through sculpture and mosaic: at all events the northern scriptoria escaped from the mere ingenuities of unmeaning pattern. The British Church had

¹ It is worth remembering that this is the earliest Crucifixion known, as the MS. is (happily) dated 586 A.D.: and that this incident, the use of this immemorial game instead of dice, distinguishes it from all others, except, I believe, one ivory carving.

much to receive in exchange for her liberty. "Increased communication with Rome," says Professor Westwood, "led to the adoption of a *more realistic treatment of the human figure*, as well as to a *more general adoption of foliage* as an element of ornamental design. Indeed, after the ninth or first half of the tenth century, I have been unable to find any Anglo-Saxon MS. executed in the Lindisfarne or Irish style, although it remained for several centuries longer in use in Ireland, considerably modified, however, in its ornamental details."

It is curious that the love of foliage ornament should turn up in MSS., just as the forest-born Gothic, the wooden architecture of the north, meets with and modifies the Roman architecture of stone; in the same way and about the same time. But that is it; the great artistic races take nature as they find her, and learn her lessons with a free heart; and their greatest artists, born leaders like Pisano, learn study of nature in a great style from the relics of Græco-Roman art. They not only fall to the right subjects, but go back to the right models of study. But this renewed Hellenic study of nature is the true Renaissance of art. It was part of the first-fruits of Christian civilisation for the north, and its seeds or its possibilities could not have been preserved without the religious houses. Soon began the beautiful life of the great cities of Northern Italy, and the Lombard genius showed all its power for 400 years. Emerging from heavy trial, and preparing for more, Christianity had taken the cowl; but she still bore with her an inheritance of the arts of other days. She issued from Ireland and from Rome to possess the mingled races of England for ever. From Ireland her fair-written MSS. still testify to the peace that they had who loved the law of God, even in days of massacre. The quaint patterns show in their intricate puzzle of pretty colour the monk's simplicity and pleasant labour; without much thought, and for a time happy in his skill only. From the seventh to the tenth century Rome is prostrate, except for the alliance of the new Empire. A new stream of Christian teaching, verbal and pictorial, sets over the Continent from the north-west, bearing its Irish missionaries,

and help to Latin Christianity. Rome is for a while reformed and allied with Pepin and Charlemagne; and the relics of her arts and learning are eagerly embraced by Lombards, Franks, and English; so that the Anglo-Saxon calligraphists begin again to take lessons from Greece and Rome (having done so before from the Ravenna mosaics), and they learn to prefer miniature to mere pattern, and emulate (or produce) the great Carolingian MSS. In these the study of nature becomes a more important feature than their imperial splendour, or their Merovingian grotesqueness; and with the study of nature, Gothic copyists now combine faithful emulation of classical models, such as they know. There is great difference in the genius, the opportunities, and the success of Niccola Pisano, Count Vivien, Rabula the Syrian monk, or the writers of the Augustinian or Athelstan's Psalters, who are nameless; but the artistic excellence of their work is due to the same principles of study; nor in any of these cases could it have existed without the gradual victory of the faith, which alone made study possible, for these and all the earlier scribes.

A few words should be said about decoration in columns. The Canons of Eusebius were early added to the Sacred Text (as in the Laurentian or Rabula MS. 586 A.D.), where they are luxuriantly ornamented in columns and spaces; and in the Evangeliary of Ulfilas (written, as is supposed, about the same time). The idea of ornamental pillars to separate a calendar may have been derived from the fronts of ancient sarcophagi; at all events parallel columns and arcades, with wreaths, scrolls, flower-work, and birds among them, were a natural and pleasing kind of decoration. The seventh century Evangeliary named "Colbert" (Bastard, vol. i.), has its columns drawn firmly and beautifully with the pen. We have had enough about the skill of conscientious practice; it raises calligraphy to fine art. The O of Giotto was a fair test of his great executive power, no doubt; but it is excelled in difficulty and interest by these free pen-drawn birds and grotesques; and it is curious that the last reminiscence of the vanished art of writing should still be the swans or birds of the modern writing-master's flourish.

There are one or two examples of epigraphs and commendatory paragraphs from Guéranger¹ which may be added here. They are not quite like the earliest inscription of the kind on record—the quiet greeting of S. Paul's secretary: "I, Tertius, who wrote this epistle, salute you," but they have their interest.

From a Greek Evangeliary, eleventh century:

"This book has been written by the hand of a sinner. May the most Holy Mother of God, and S. Eutychius, vouchsafe to accept its homage: and may the Lord God, by intercession of the most Holy Mother of God and S. Eutychius, give us eternal life in Heaven. Amen."

From the Missal of S. Maur des Fossés:

"This book belongs to S. Mary and S. Peter of the Monastery of the Trenches. He who shall have stolen it, or sold it, or have in any way withdrawn it from this place: or who shall have been its buyer—may he be for ever in the company of Judas, Pilate, and Caiaphas. Amen, amen. Fiat, fiat."

"Brother Robert Gualensis (of Wales?) being yet young and a Levite, hath devoutly written it for his soul's health, in the time of Louis (le Gros) King of the Franks, and of Ascelin, abbot of this place. Richard, prior and monk, caused this book to be copied, in order to deserve the Heavenly and blessed country. Thou, O priest, who ministerest before the Lord, be mindful of him. Paternoster."

The distinguished caligraphists of the ninth century Evangeliary of S. Emmeran at Ratisbon, seem not to have been bad scholars by any means, and to have had a wonderful turn for Latin verse for their time; but their names, Berenger and Luther, are somehow rather ominous. Thus runs their epigraph—

"Bis quadringenti volitant et septuaginta "
Anni, quo Deus est Virgine natus Homo
Ter denis annis Karolus regnabat et uno,
Cum Codex actus illius imperio.

¹ *Institutions Liturgiques*, last ch. vol. ii.

² Can there have been a "Gradus" in those days?—such a verse could hardly be written without one.

Hactenus undosum calamo descripsimus œquor ;
 Littoris ad finem nostra carina manet.
 Sanguine nos uno patris matrisque creati,
 Atque sacerdotis servit uterque gradum.
 En Berengarius, Leuthardus nomine dicti,
 Quis fuerat sudor, difficilisque nimis.
 Illic tibimet, lector, succedant verba precantis
 Ut dicas, capiant regna beata poli."

MABILLON, *Iter Germanicus*, p. 53.

It is nice, and ends well ; perhaps they were good scholars of Alcuin's. But nothing else has the strange commanding interest for ourselves—especially for North countrymen—of the inscription in the hand of him of Iona and Lindisfarne. Other MSS. may be of equal value, but no title ever can be like S. Columba's.¹ He has fled away, and is at rest.

¹ See p. 1 of this book.

CHAPTER XI.

THE LOMBARDS.

"ON their first establishment in the country," says Sismondi (vol. i. 30), "the Lombards had abused their victory more cruelly than their predecessors the Goths, and accordingly a more violent hatred separated the two nations, which endured long after the fall of the monarchy of Pavia." He then quotes, with an explanatory paragraph about its circumstances, the hearty expressions of contempt, amounting to personal defiance, in which Bishop Luitprand conveyed to Nicephorus Phocas what we may certainly style a bit of his episcopal mind.¹ The Byzantine Emperor Phocas had observed disparagingly of the German, that Otho I. was not a Roman, but a German. "Quite so," replies the bishop, "he is not: in fact we Lombards, and the Saxons, Franks, Lotharingians too, and Bavarians, Swabians, and Burgundians also, have such an intense contempt for the Roman name, that we can't call a man by a worse name when we are angry than Roman. We understand everything by that name; everything low, cowardly, greedy, lewd and lying—all the vices together." As Luitprand's embassy was successful, we may suppose that Phocas was soldier enough to enjoy his free speech, which appears more like fierce assertion of his

¹ Luitprandus, *Legatio ad Nicephorum Phocam* (*Muratori*, vol. ii. part i.). The bishop's own account of his embassy, applauded by Gibbon, and on all hands, as one of the most interesting important contemporary descriptions in existence. The embassy was from Otho I. to arrange the marriage of his son, Otho II., with Theophania or Nicephora.

master's honour than deliberate estimate of all citizens of ancient Latin blood. But the extraordinary race from whom he was descended were as remarkable for their ferocity and destructive barbarism in early days, as they were for their willing application and brilliant power in arts, arms, and commerce, as soon as they had learnt that their Scandinavian ideas, of life between shock of battle and war of revel, were neither the best in this world, nor likely to be realised eternally in the next. This change from the barbarism of Vikingir and Varangir to intelligent adoption of Græco-Roman arts, laws, language, and municipal life (all learnt through prior acceptance of the Faith in Christ, and her first gifts to her wild catechumens), takes place, or rather comes into full action between Alboin and Agilulf, about thirty years, 569—594. (Agilulf reigned till 615.)

The position of the Lombards, who seem to have been converted to Catholicism very early, without passing as a nation through the Arian stage of belief, like the Ostrogoths and others—had this great advantage, that it set them at one with both clergy and people, and prevented their continuing, like the descendants of Theodoric, an isolated garrison in the land. The respect paid by that great man to the civil institutions and traditions of the empire has been described by Mr. Bryce, whose observations on the gradual assimilation of Imperial ideas and habits by the invading races seem extremely important.¹ It is probable that the Arian persuasion of the first conquerors was even more unwelcome to Italy than the wild barbarism of Lombards who accepted the Catholic creed. Their capacity for learning seems to have been far above that of any preceding race; and the career of Clovis in Gaul proved how great advantages followed from religious unity once secured between the conquering and conquered race. The conversion of the "Longobardi" may be conveniently dated from the baptism of Autharis and Theodolinda (she after-

¹ Mr. Freeman also observes (*Hist. Arch.* p. 176) that though the Lombards were in every respect inferior to Theodoric and his Goths, there can be no doubt that Italy, could she have reconciled herself to the idea of a barbarian sovereign, might have enjoyed more real happiness under the royal house of Alboin than the turbulent days of her own later emperors had ever afforded.

wards wedded Agilulf; and the change which brought their conversion about may be estimated by the different stories told by their own chronicler of Rosamond and Alboin, and of Theodolinda and her first and second wooing; one being exactly the tale which Gibbon delighted to narrate, the other most knightly, pure, and beautiful. However, the great chivalric qualities displayed in the former history by Turismund, the Gepid king, seem to indicate the excellence of the original metal of which these great races were forged in the *Officina Gentium*; and Alboin's own occasional acts of mercy (as in sparing Pavia after long siege) are not lost sight of by his historian and descendant. Paul Warnefrid the Deacon claims to be of the blood of Alboin, with whom Leophis, his great-grandfather, had crossed the Eastern Alps. He was highly educated at the 'Lombard court, and taken prisoner by Charlemagne after the final defeat of Didier or Desiderius. Though at first taken into Charlemagne's favour he was suspected of retaining his fealty to Didier, and long imprisoned in the Isle of Diomeda (or Tremiti) in the Venetian Archipelago. He escaped to the Duke of Benevento, and (after his death) became a Benedictine of Monte Casino, where he seems to have written his chronicle, and many copies of Latin verses. There is a hymn in Iambics, not unlike Prudentius, and he has framed, he says, a list of S. Benedict's miracles one by one in separate couplets of elegaic metre—and so he has. He has done his duty by the founder of his order in such hexameters and pentameters as never perhaps were conceived before or since by any of the sons of men.*

But before the earliest dawn of the true or Lombard Renaissance in the seventh century, another light had sprung up in Eastern Italy, in the last fortress of the Eastern Empire. This has been partly described in the chapters on Architecture and Mosaics, and was part of the greatness of Theodoric the Great, or Dietrich of Bern (Verona), as he is styled in the Nibelungen-lied. He is the champion of the great

* Jornandes the Ostrogoth wrote his book, *De Rebus Geticis* under similar circumstances, in the retirement of a monastery.

Rabenschlacht or battle of Ravenna, and stands between fable and history, looming in grandeur half made out, like the head and shoulders of Michael Angelo's statue of Day; like Arthur and Odin, or Charlemagne or Frederick Barbarossa. Had the Ostrogothic race retained their power they might have restored art instead of the Lombards, but time was not allowed them. They produced hardly any work of their own, though the Ravennese mosaics¹ and the palace and magnificent sepulchre of their great king, showed how well they appreciated and employed the skill of Romano-Byzantine workmen, both in the engineering and the decorative part of architecture. The columns of the palace called Theodoric's at Ravenna, show the Neo-Greek acanthus once more; not unlike that of Torcello, and beautiful in its delicate lace-work of points of shade and sharp leaves, which are nevertheless massive enough to resist many centuries more.

These columns show their derivation from the Composite, but are a great improvement on it. The external arcades, the glory of the Lombard Pisa in after days, appear in this Ostrogothic palace also. Another important work at Pavia is mentioned by Paul the Deacon (*De G. L.* iv. 22). It was certainly a mosaic portrait of Theodoric, and is mentioned (unless there was a similar picture) by Procopius *De Bello Gothico* xxiv., as "*exlapillis compacta, minutis admodum, et versicoloribus fere singulis.*" Its head fell away just before Theodoric's death; the middle at Amalosuntha's, and the legs and feet crumbled at the coming of Belisarius, when the renewed force of the Empire reasserted its hold on Italy. The great architectural monument of the Ostrogothic Renaissance has been described at p. 224. That revival was brief and partial, but some notice of it seems necessary here. It was not the outgrowth of any national feeling for the arts; it was due to the patronage of a king educated at the Byzantine court, and at the head of a race who did not, like Luitprand, consider themselves aliens to, but members of, the great Roman State. The final edict of Caracalla as

¹ In S. Giovanni and the Arian Baptistry.

to citizenship had had its effect ; and Rome, in abandoning privileges of conquest, had her reward in becoming universal, as Mr. Bryce observes.¹ This seems especially true as to the Ostrogoths : as Sismondi observes (i. 28) their history is only an episode of that of the Lower Empire. The kingdom of Odovakar, who introduced no new race into Italy, but only ruled as chief of the mercenaries of the ruined empire, lasted but for fourteen years. Theodoric had been sent to Leo in 463, ten years after the unknown voice had told by night that the bow of Attila was broken. He was then eight years old, and left Constantinople at eighteen, a year before Leo was succeeded by Zeno the Isaurian in 474. He was on the whole faithful to Zeno till 487, when he was in great measure compelled by the expansive restlessness of his subjects to march on Constantinople (as represented in the perhaps native art of his race in the curious mosaic in S. Giovanni Baptista at Ravenna). Zeno contrived to divert his attack on Italy. He invaded it in 438, and the next thirty-five years completed his conquest by the death of Odovakar, 493. His long and prosperous reign continued for thirty-three years after, and till his latter days he seems to have acted with almost uniform justice and wisdom. In the suspicious jealousy of his old age he was guilty of the deaths of Boëthius and Symmachus, and is said to have died in great distress and remorse, and partly of the shock of recognising the probably Roman profile of Symmachus in a large fish at dinner. His policy had been benevolence and tolerance ; he had established his soldiers in the military tenure of one-third of the lands of Italy, to form a standing army, and opened all peaceful pursuits to the Romans, though he forbade them the use of arms : it seemed as if the two races could thus exist side by side, and, as Sismondi observes, his measures gave the provincials some comfort and confidence in themselves, which in some

¹ "The Teutonic tribes slowly established themselves through the provinces ; they entered, not as savage strangers, but as colonists knowing something of the system into which they came, and not unwilling to be considered its members ; despising the degenerate provincials who struck no blow in their own defence, but full of respect for the majestic power which had for so many centuries incorporated and instructed them."

degree restored and elevated their character. But the rule of the Ostrogoths continued but sixty-four years, and for the last eighteen the renewed strength of the Byzantine Empire was wielded against them by Belisarius and Narses; the taking of Cumæ by the latter in 553 and the death of Teias seemed to reduce all again beneath the Eastern Empire, till the new wave of invasion from Pannonia, and indeed, as it seems, from Scandinavia itself, flowed over nearly the whole peninsula once more. The unhappy Italians were again overrun by a strange and, at first, merciless race, who knew nothing of the past, and whose kings had not been taught the greatness of the Empire or wonders of its civilisation, and preferred drinking from their enemies' skulls to the most exquisite of its unknown luxuries. Paul the Deacon declares that he has himself seen the identical scala or goblet, made by Alboin from the skull of Cunimund, and mounted in gold. "*Hoc ne cui videatur impossibile : veritatem in Christo loquar. Ego hoc poculum vidi, in quodam die festo, Rachis (sic) principem, ut illud convivis suis ostentaret, manu tenentem*" (De G. L., ii. 28). This has not escaped Gibbon. The Deacon dates the origin of his race from Scandia or Gothland, and it is useless to revive the ancient controversy, on which Cluverius and Grotius take different sides, as to Brandenburg or Scandinavia being their earlier home. They come within range of history and geography somewhere not far from Vienna, on the Danube, in the time of Odovakar; and it would agree with their character, as Northmen of the higher stamp, that they showed such early capacity for sculpture, as hammer-work, and indeed, as it would seem, for work in metals. They may have been already workers in wood and iron, as true Scandinavians; and the transition from smith to sculptor was likely to be made by an inventive and poetic race as soon as they came in contact with the marbles of Verona, and saw the models of classic workmanship there, and in Pavia and Ravenna. It is equally remarkable in this great race how rapidly they were softened, and how slightly they were demoralised under the enervating sky of Italy and in the atmosphere of her cities. They adopted the Roman

municipal life and laws, and acquired with that the civilisation of the Etrurian Renaissance, and the strength which enabled them to resist the Swabian Empire as federated republics, though the Carolingian power had overwhelmed them for a time as a monarchy.

Their most important or at least most obvious relation to ancient Greece has been already hinted at in this book from Sismondi, as followed by Mr. Hallam. What they did for good, they did for the world ; and their works are the Divine Comedy, the revival of the Greek language, the Baptistery of Pisa, the Tower and Dome of Florence, the statues of Day and Night. But for themselves, they did after the manner of men, with the cunning and fierceness of their fathers, Etrurian or Berserk. "They played over again the tragedy of ancient Greece, with all its circumstances of inveterate hatred, unjust ambition, and atrocious retaliation, though with less consummate actors upon the scene." The Theban destruction of Plataea, and the Athenian massacre of Melos, were renewed in their time, as surely as the power of Pheidias revived from Pisani to Michael Angelo ; and it awakens strange thoughts in a Christian student of history to see how great effect Christianity produced on the wild fathers of a race, who received it joyfully, and how little on their children, who have not kept it. The story of failure and degeneracy is always the same ; nevertheless the faith continues, and continues to bear gifts for men. Alboin had vowed a general sack and massacre of Pavia, but his horse fell on entering the city, and could not get up till he had withdrawn his purpose. He had previously met with Felix, bishop of Tarvisium or Treviso, somewhere on the Piave, and had entered into some kind of terms with him ; as Paul says, "*Omnes suæ ecclesiæ facultates postulanti (Felici) concessit.*" It is probable that he was willing to have the help of the orthodox clergy with him against the remnant of the Arian Ostrogoths, and this may account for his occasional mildness of conduct, and for his general success, as in the case of Clovis. Conquerors who would advance beyond Arianism, and accept the whole faith, had the advantage of having the only element of strength or permanent government

which remained in the country constantly in their favour.¹ The results of Alboin's mercy to Pavia after his three years' siege were great indeed, and seem almost to have determined the conditions and character of his race.²

In about thirty years from Alboin's great inroad by Friuli, Theodolinda, the beloved queen of Lombardo, was on the eve of her second marriage with Agilulf of Turin, and Gregory the First ascended the papal chair in the year 599. Meanwhile all Italy had been overrun, though never permanently settled under Lombard organisation. The Duchy of Benevento, founded by Autharis, maintained almost entire independence of the throne of Pavia and Verona; the Eastern Empire yet maintained its hold on Ravenna and Romagna, while a far greater result of Alboin's ravages, the Republic of Venice, had already begun its existence on the islets of Torcello and Rio Alto. Till Autharis all seems confusion in Italy, and mutual inroad from both sides of the Alps between Franks, Saxons and Lombards; but after his accession general security began to prevail, and as the Deacon has it, "nemo aliquem injuste angariabat."³ A new order of things

¹ With his own people, and even among Saxons and Bavarians, the name of Alboin was long remembered by scalds and minstrels: and an indication of greater skill in crafts is given by the Deacon's statement at the end of his first book, that excellent arms (*præcipua arma*) were made in his time.

² Story of Autharis and Theodolinda. The savage life and treacherous death of Alboin, with its attendant abominations, may be compared with the first, and indeed the second wooing of Theodolinda thirty years after. She was daughter of Garibaldus (of all names in the world), King of the Bajoarii, or Bavarians. Autharis of Lombardy is her lover; he comes, disguised as his own ambassador, to her father's court to ask her in marriage. She pours out his wine at the feast; he takes her hand, and gently passes it over his own face. She consults her nurse about this strange freedom, and is told that none but the king, her future husband, could have dared to take it. The pretended ambassador is honourably escorted to the frontier of his own land; but as he passes it he swings his heavy battle-axe and drives it deep into a pine-trunk, saying, "Such a blow deals the King of Lombardo." Meanwhile it is prophesied to Agilulf, who rides in his train, that the King's bride shall be his bride. Happier and better times begin with the reign of Autharis and Theodolinda, and on his death the voice of her nobles and people invites her to remain on the throne, and choose another love. She consents; and her peers do her homage in succession, with some feudal ceremonial which includes kissing the hand. And her choice is first made known to its object, Agilulf of Taurini or Turin, by her bidding him go on from her hand to her lips, as he was the chosen of Lombardy and of herself, her lord and king.

³ A verb previously unknown to the author, but which he takes to mean, not "aggravated" but exacted labour (*ἀγγαρεύειν*, S. Matt. 5).

seems, at all events, to have begun with the influence of Gregory I. over the Lombard king and queen. The singular benevolence of a man in whom hatred for evil took the form of love for the sinner who did it, seems to have distinguished Gregory above all things from his contemporaries and successors; more than the keen intellect which might have healed the iconoclastic schism, and the missionary enterprise which sent Augustine to the Kentish Saxons. Two or three letters of his are extant about Autharis. One describes his unfeigned alarm on hearing the Lombards were approaching, which has not unnaturally interrupted his commentary on Ezekiel (otherwise, as he complains, extremely difficult); the others are written with much simplicity and pithy dignity to his children Autharis and Theodolinda. He thanks them, in fact, for having spared him and Rome, but urges on the queen in particular what the sufferings of the poor coloni would have been in case of continued war: it is almost the first instance in modern history of any person at the head of affairs even pretending to think about them. He sets forth the misery of Italy, and their power for good or evil; and it seems to have been the beginning of an influence with them which certainly conduced to the happiness of their newly conquered country. Some curious and highly interesting vessels, which once contained sacred oil, and were sent to Theodolinda by Gregory (with a reliquary—crucifix, perhaps the earliest on record), are still preserved in the treasury of Modætia or Moroza. The first are of special value, as forming a step in the transition from the cross, as representing the person of our Lord, to the crucifix or symbol of His death and accomplished work for man. In the centre of the circular surface of the flask is a small ornamented cross, with two kneeling figures; at the top is a nimbed head of Christ; on each side above the cross are two figures with arms extended, representing the two thieves; the Blessed Virgin and S. John are beyond them close to the edge, and beneath is the representation of the resurrection (generally a part of the earliest Crucifixions, and greatly resembling that in the Rabula MS. in its small, upright sepulchre, like a kind of garden-house or sentry-box). The

reliquary is without it however, and has the form of the Lord on the cross, with the nimbus, and enveloped in a long tunic or colobium to the feet. These are Roman work, of course, but the Lombard architecture and sculpture, with a few MSS., is what we must principally depend on from the seventh to the twelfth century, excepting the incrustated front of S. Michele of Lucca. There is no fine mosaic until the Pisan revival; it was perhaps the distinctive art of their despised subjects or of their jealously-regarded rivals of Byzantium; and it is probable that the exercise of hammer and chisel was more suited to their northern hands. The traditional employment of Venetian workmen in the early mosaics of Pisa and Florence is one more instance of reconciliation between the descendants of the ravagers of Aquileia and the children of the fugitives of Rio Alto; and also of acceptance on the part of the former of classical guidance, such as was left them, back into the enjoyment of colour and the art of painting.

Professor Ruskin's most important and graphic sketch of the difference between the Lombard and Byzantine work of Pavia and Lucca, Verona and Venice, has been already referred to more than once. One paragraph at its beginning might well stand for the motto of this book. "The same leaves, the same animals, the same arrangements, are used by Scandinavians, ancient Britons, Saxons, Normans, Lombards, Romans, Byzantines, and Arabs: being all alike descended through classic Greece from Egypt and Assyria, and some from Phœnicia. The belts which encompass the Assyrian bulls in the hall of the British Museum are the same as the belts of the ornaments found in Scandinavian tumuli; their method of ornamentation is the same as that of the gate of Mycenæ, and of the Lombard pulpit of S. Ambrogio at Milan, and of the church of Theotocos at Constantinople. The essential differences among the great schools are their differences of temper and treatment and science of expression. It is absurd to talk of Norman ornaments, and Lombard and Byzantine ornaments as formally distinguished; but there is utter separation between Arab temper, and Lombard temper, and Byzantine temper."

The fact is that little is wanted to make nations or individuals distinguish themselves in art except time and love of the subject, if we allow the essential conditions of leisure and good hands and eyes. The Lombards had returned, long before Niccola Pisano, to the thoroughly Pheidian principle of representing things human and divine in architectural decoration of their temple fronts. They carved Scripture histories and careering horsemen on San Zenone at Verona, and they did it in shallow massy relief at the entrance of the crypt, and almost all over the front of the church. The solid and bossy look of the sculpture throughout is one of the chief beauties of the work, which dispenses with undercutting and deep shadow, and is Professor Ruskin's chosen example of pure sculpture, that is to say, as "a pleasant bossiness or roundness of surface, which delights the eye irrespectively of imitation on one side and of structure on the other." And as has been shown, this church is directly connected, through the subjects of its sculpture and the castings of its brazen gates, with the earliest Christian art of the catacomb frescoes and sarcophagi, while through the mediæval or Teutonic ideas in their treatment, and the substratum of Byzantine workmanship, it binds the classical age to the early Gothic or Middle ; exactly as the Psalter of Athelstan, by its Romano-Saxon ornament, gives token of a Northern hand instructed in quasi-classical subject and working. Moreover, the singular excellence of the masonry in the Lombard S. Zenone is in strong contrast with the carelessly joined stones of the Byzantine S. Mark's—which indicates the progressive character of one style and the stationary torpor of the other. The three churches of S. Michele at Pavia, S. Michele at Lucca, and S. Zenone at Verona, then, may best represent the Lombard work under ordinary classical teaching, and before Niccola Pisano went back from Græco-Roman to Greek. The earliest Basilica of S. Zenone was probably coeval with S. Michele of Pavia and the Lombard works in S. Ambrogio of Milan.

The grotesque in art, or that feeling for humour and incongruity which is one form of the Northern defiance of evil and death, begins with these works. " Eastern influence

is best traced in Venetian sculpture by the dying away of the grotesque laughter of the Goth," and so indeed it is; though it may be a question whether some analogous traces of Roman or Romano-barbaric humour do not appear in the Vatican Terence, and the specially delectable MS. of Virgil referred to at p. 325. However, the Lombard sculpture being unquestionably formed on Græco-Roman, is rightly styled Romanesque, and opposed to the Græco-Byzantine by its Gothic love of jest, motion, and spirit, and also in two important technical features—the excellence of its masonry, and the shallow cutting of its most spirited carvings.

The proper deviation of Byzantine and Lombard Romanesque is in the fact of the latter being work of semi-barbarian vigour, and ignorant of traditional rule. The former clings with Eastern tenacity, yet with true religious spirit, to the tradition of classical art, which the others respected but would not serve. The church of S. Zenone is mentioned, perhaps for the first time on record, by Paul the Deacon (*De G. L.*, lib. iii. c. 23) as "*Basilica Beati Zenonis martyris, quæ extra Veronensis urbis muros sita est.*" The great flood of the Adige, October 14, 599—which took place about the same time as S. Gregory's accession to the popedom—reached the walls of the church but did not enter it, which the Deacon considers a miraculous interposition. He also mentions S. Michele of Pavia in 661.

The three churches, or what remains of them, will give the traveller an adequate notion of the Lombard character and energies. In the Pavian church, by far the oldest, wildness of barbaric fancy runs its full course—"The west front is more like a feverish dream than a result of any determined architectural purpose, or even of any definite love of the grotesque. One capital is covered with a mass of grinning heads, other heads grow out of two bodies—all are fighting, devouring, and struggling. . . . Neither sphinxes nor centaurs did I notice, nor a single peacock (I believe peacocks to be purely Byzantine),¹ but mermaids with two tails, large fish, apes, stags (bulls?), dogs, wolves, and horses, griffins,

¹ And Augustan-classical—they are found in the Jewish catacombs, and elsewhere, as commonplace ornament of the Pompeian style and period.

eagles, long-tailed birds (cocks?), hawks, and dragons without end, or with a dozen of ends, as the case may be; smaller birds, with rabbits and small nondescripts, filling the friezes."

There seems to be little classicalism here; the griffins, it is true, are connected in after time with the cherubs of the elder dispensation and with the evangelical symbols of the new.¹ But these animals are found, with bears and all beasts of chase, in Visigothic, Merovingian, and Carolingian work; and there is this parallelism of treatment, that the later work is less outrageously grotesque, and closer to nature in its drawing. S. Zenone, where all is sculpture, is livelier and more combative than S. Michele of Lucca, which is perhaps the noblest instance in Italy of the Lombard spirit in its later refinement. However, though their earliest work is only that of excellent untaught hands, observation, and untrained fancy, there is one link of connection between it and the Greece of other days. It is the vine; which, by some strange, unconscious symbolism, still holds races together. The vine it undoubtedly is, even in the Pavian S. Michele: it is carved in the west façade, twining round a stake, and with grapes, and is perhaps the first acceptance of Christian symbolism yet uncomprehended. All this sculpture is coarse sandstone and massy relief, excepting a few variegated tiles set concave, and like saucers, gracefully arranged. But S. Michele of Lucca is all incrustation of white marble and green serpentine, with hardly any relieved work, excepting the capitals and cornices, and small pieces of sculpture which relieve the flatness of the wall. There is a drawing in plate vii. of the *Seven Lamps of Architecture*, and a beautiful line engraving at p. 365 *Stones of Venice*, plate i. xxi., which, with Mr. Gally Knight's general-effect views, will give the student some idea of the progress of Lombard sculpture.

Another unconscious return in the direction of old Greek principle is the ample quantity of the ornament. It is often redundant in the Northern work; the pleasure of newly

¹ Reference has been made to this at pp. 153, 163, in the notice of the Laurentian or Rabula MS. with its cherubic chariot.

earned skill is great, and the artist knows not how or where to leave off. Nevertheless, there is the characteristic of fullness in both old Greek and Lombard. Both are inexhaustible in subject, and determined to have ornament simply wherever they can put it to their own satisfaction. The Greek always chose the right place and distance, and drew on his unlimited store of mythology for subjects to the honour of his God. The Lombard thinks his own soul's desire and duteous labour a thing in itself to God's glory ; all is to him church ornament that adorns a church, and like the early Christians, he decorates for dedication's sake. We only see Greek temples in their ruin, and have no idea of their glow of internal colour, or the subject paintings, which in all probability made them as varied and glorious within as Gothic cathedrals. The white light and unmeaning ornament of Renaissance classicism may be preferable to Greek or Gothic ; but it *is* neither one nor the other ; it is only a reproduction of the Roman decadence by non-colourists.

For other relics, the iron crown and the plain diadem worn by Theodolinda are figured in Muratori's edition of *Paul Warnefrid*. But his plate of the bas-relief (tabula marmorea) which once stood over the door of the ancient Duomo of Monza, is still more interesting. The original building was entirely renewed in 1396 ; and some of the figures resemble those in the mosaics of Ravenna ; nevertheless, the Deacon's description of the mosaic of Theodoric at Pavia makes it certain that he would have described this as one, if it had not been sculpture. It seems to have filled the tympanum of a door. Agilulf kneels on the spectator's left, wearing a long tunic over his mail, and what seem to be rowelled spurs. Theodolinda offers her crown on the other side. There are crosses resting on chalices, and the almost unique emblem of the hen and chickens. In such a place, one cannot but suppose it is an allusion to S. Luke xiii. 34, and in that case the Chioccia, or silver-gilt hen of Theodolinda, still preserved in the Cathedral Treasury, must have the same meaning, rather than refer to the Seven Lombard Princes, or the Archbishop of Monza. Below, on each side, are S. Peter with the keys, and S. Paul with a sword ; in the

centre is the baptism of Our Lord, with an attendant angel, the water rising pyramidically up to His waist; and on either side again, the Blessed Virgin and S. John the Evangelist.

The date of the bronze gates of S. Zenone is uncertain; they are so quaint and rude in workmanship (see especially *Aratra Pentelici*, plate i. ii.) that they might be supposed to date earlier than the present eleventh-century church. The possibility of their having been made at Constantinople is to be considered, and Lord Lindsay inclines to that idea; but the characteristic difference of some of the groups from any Byzantine ideal, in the traditional subjects is very great, and betrays the northern design. Thus, the sword of the angel who expels our first parents from Paradise, and that which Abraham uses in his sacrifice, are formidable and straight Gothic weapons; the gabled tabernacle of Noah's ark, though related to the square chest of the catacombs, and through that to the *κιβώτος* of Apamea and ancient Greek design, is quite like an Italian Gothic altar; the dove flies like a falcon; Adam and Eve are sent forth from Paradise as on the sarcophagi; Cain fells Abel with a short bludgeon; and the brazen serpent is suspended on a Tau cross. The Divine Lamb is on the keystone of the round arch, which forms the high porch; and the hand of blessing is in the low gable or fastigium of the pediment above. Tall Corinthian pillars support this porch, based on lions or griffins. The lion, says Ciampini, is considered as representing watchfulness or vigour, or authority in the faith. He has been used by all races for ornament, from Assyria and Egypt and the throne of Solomon downwards, and conveys the idea of a watchful sentinel at the church gates; or, as a supporter to columns of ambons, he may possibly be intended as an exhortation to wakefulness.

Three epochs of Lombard architecture are named by Mr. Gally Knight, and accepted by Dr. Freeman in his *History of Architecture*. There is their period of conquest from 568 to 790. For the ninth and tenth centuries there is little to show except S. Ambrogio at Milan, which was finished in its Lombard additions or restorations before 861. The second

period is the Renaissance of the eleventh century, when the grotesqueness of their sculpture is much subdued, and the Cathedral of Pisa, whether "Busketus" or Busketh were German or Italian, must be taken to represent it. Then comes the third epoch of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, with S. Michele of Lucca as its chief example. The new or revived characteristics of their structure and ornament may be nearly thus enumerated.

The idea of the peristyle, or at least of external columns for ornament alone, returns in a new form, and arcades now adorn palaces and church fronts, story above story. Rules of proportion are abandoned accordingly, as the Greeks themselves modified them whenever it seemed necessary. Square doorways are retained under round arches, because, as Dr. Freeman observes, the tympanum gave so good an opportunity for sculpture. The doors, in fact, strongly resemble our own Norman, and this and other architectural forms seem to have given great pleasure to the caligraphers and miniaturists of the time, who repeat them frequently.

Strong clustered piers and thick walls now give sign of the northern origin of the builders; and the strength of their building and excellence of its masonry sends them back to stone vaultings, not only with the plain Roman barrel-vault, but with cross-arches. Sculpture continues throughout, the beautiful gradually prevailing over the grotesque.

The ground-plans often combine the Byzantine dome with the long nave of the Basilica. But with its central position, the dome appears to lose chief importance as dominant feature of the whole. "The Lombard octagon," as Dr. Freeman says, "is not the whole soul of the building, for the sake of which alone all the rest exists; it is but one feature among many, though by far the most commanding one." One, or three, semi-circular apses complete the east ends of churches, and beautiful galleries of open arches often run round the exterior upper part, as at Murano and Sta. Maria at Arezzo.

From A.D. 1081 to 1180, especially under the Emperor Manuel, the Byzantine monarchy, says Gibbon, "became an

object of respect or terror to the powers of Asia and Europe." Lord Lindsay suggests that Manuel Panselinos, celebrated by the author of the *Manuel d'Iconographie Chrétienne*, and M. Didron its editor, may have been created by the revival of national spirit under the Comnenii. He is known to have worked in the eleventh century, and his works are shown in the principal church of Kares, the capital of Mount Athos. Thessalonica seems to have been a chief seat of Byzantine art up to this time, and M. Didron says the mosaics of its Rotunda are the most ancient and beautiful in Greece.

The three arts may be said to have revived, or begun to revive, on both sides of Italy at once, east and west, in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Their "double sunrise" is associated with the name of Niccola Pisano in particular, and with the Eastern war and commerce of the city of his birth. With direct access of her own to Greece and the East, Pisa gave birth to a school of artists who followed the models and methods of ancient Athens, and worked from nature as they saw her, on virtually the same principle as Pheidias. The old spirit and practice of Greek art thus became an innovation (or renovation) on Eastern-Greek, or Eastern-Roman, or Byzantine. On that side of Italy art had not perished; for the building of the first Cathedral of Torcello, or the Church of Sta. Fosca, took place on the destruction of Altinum in 691, and her citizens reproduced, or perhaps in part conveyed from the mainland, the Græco-Roman carvings of their fathers. From Torcello came the settlement on Rio Alto, and Venice stood free and separate from Italy, continuing her homage to the Eastern Empire; and such instruction as Eastern-Roman painters (called Greek) could give Italy, were given through Venice for the most part; whether Niccola Pisano and the western school owed her much, or little, or nothing at all.* Arnolfo is said by d'Agincourt to have studied under Niccola, with Agostino

* Vasari says that Niccola Pisano was under Greek sculptors who were carving the front of the Duoma of Pisa, when the boar-hunt of Meleager attracted his attention. D'Agincourt gives an outline of it (*Sculpture*, pl. xxxii.); also of another bas-relief of Phiedra and Hippolytus. The Greek workmen would not probably scruple to do shallow reliefs, though they would hardly have executed separate statues.

and Agnolo of Siena. Names are unrecorded, or disputed, on the Venetian side. But it may be for the convenience of the student to consider Pisa as the centre of Lombard art, instructed by ancient Greece; Venice of the unbroken traditions of Byzantium, likely to encumber the old-new teaching; Verona, as the central city, standing on the great road of the Adige Valley, of which northern Teutonic invasion has always made such use.¹

The same representative works, accordingly, have been always selected, by different writers in various forms of words, for study and comment, as typical of Lombard-Roman or Greek-Roman, and Byzantine-Roman or Greek, whichever we like to call them. And the purpose of this book, which can only be an introductory fragment, at best, to the really historical study of its art period, will be completed with a little description of these well-known exemplaria, and with directions, if possible, how and where to study them. The Cathedral, and Baptistery, and Campo Santo of Pisa, represent the Lombard-Greek transition; the pulpit or pergamo of Niccola of Pisa, its "classical" example, and the existence of its cusped arches, shows the way of transition to pointed architecture; at least it is selected for that purpose, and with good reason, by Prof. Ruskin in *Val d'Arno*. (He also mentions the combination of round and pointed arches in the Duomo, &c. &c.) The large model of this pulpit at South Kensington will enable anybody who will really look at it to understand the connection and transition between Greek sculpture and Gothic, and between the Roman arch and the pointed. It is figured in d'Agincourt (*Sculpture*, pl. xxxii.), and what is perhaps best, it is to be had at historical or artistic photograph shops, with other excellent reproductions of the Duomo and Campo Santo, &c. &c. Further, for the best sculpture of Niccola's school, the front of the Cathedral of Orvieto is accessible in photograph, and a good notion of its sculptures may be obtained from d'Agincourt (*Sculpture*, pl. xxxiii.).

¹ The first Lombard inroad was by Friuli; but later Imperial or German invasions have taken more central ingress.

It may be said of them, as against the Eastern work, that they neglect nature no more, and therefore at once advance in beauty—as against old Attic art, that they have learnt to dwell on expression of countenance and to understand the significance of human features as exponents of the spirit within. Greek method and style in grouping, in distributing forms over a surface, in balance and symmetry of similar, yet contrasted action, on each side of a composition, are all there ; but there is a great earnestness about the subject, the events told in the bas-relief are solemn matters of hope and fear, not pageantry of the triumph of Athene ; and the terrors of judgment and condemnation are there with the History of the Faith. The study of the figure, nude or draped, is evidently faithful and highly successful, and the grotesque begins to appear in some of the grinning demons of the Inferno. In d'Agincourt's first-chosen example of one of the panels of Niccola's pulpit, the Adoration of the Magi is represented. The arrangement is quite that of the early sarcophagi, but the drapery is studied like the Greek ; Greek horses stand on the right, action is in the free and flowing lines, and the faces wear an expression of interest and reverence which is Christian, and Christian only. Matured science cannot add much to the greatness of works like these. As something is always lost to the painter's feeling when the first trenchant outlines are gone and the completed picture stands in their place, so it is with the guiding art which has shown the way. Direct effort at the mark, powerful hold on conception, certainty of what he meant to do, and knowledge when he had done, only affected by technical advance—these seem to be the chief qualities of the work of Niccola Pisano. The same difficulty exists in assigning all the works attributed to him to his own personal hand-craft as with the sculpture of the Parthenon and Pheidias. D'Agincourt resigns the attempt to decide whether disputed works are his, his son's, or some great scholar's, and the pulpit will be quite enough for the wants of the student.

Niccola Pisano comes in contact with history as having designed the great abbey called Sta. Maria della Vittoria, intended by Charles of Anjou to commemorate his final

victory over Conradino in 1268. In 1273 he was quite decrepit, so that he may be considered as representing the best thirteenth-century art of Southern Europe. After his Pisan education he seems to have worked at Bologna till 1231, when he began the great Church of S. Antony at Padua. Sta. Trinità at Florence, the Cathedral at Pistoia, the Dominican church and convent at Viterbo, S. Lorenzo at Naples, are some of his great works out of his own city. At Orvieto his sculpture mingles with his son's. The Spina Chapel and the Campo Santo belong to the latter, John of Pisa. With him sculpture returned to the Attic sources and methods. Painting had to wait in Giunta's Neo-Greek hands, for Cimabue and Giotto. On the east side of Italy, Venice never approached the grandeur, pathos, or science of Florentine sculpture; and for centuries her draughtsmen never equalled the Florentine perfection of line, light, shade, and inspiration. But the time came when her Eastern gift of colour, well trained by Etrurian masters of form, or deriving science from them, should centre in Titian, and culminate at last in the sculpturesque painting, gigantic conception, and perfect life and deeds of Tintoret, chief Christian master of the world's painting.

It is remarkable and most satisfactory that the earliest history of Venice, or her mother city, should be connected with so perfect a group of monuments as the Cathedral of Torcello and the Church of Sta. Fosca, with their relics of sculpture and mosaic. The first is a simple and complete Græco-Roman basilica, the second an octagon, with low arcades on three sides—as evidently a Christian development of the round temple as S. Stefano Rotondo at Rome. Its capitals are Composite; those of the Duomo taken from the Corinthian. The tiny church, little more than 60 feet long by 45 wide, is the more ancient of the two buildings—perhaps the work of the first fugitives from the mainland; but both are equally beautiful.¹ For a description of the

¹ Professor Ruskin agrees with the Marchese Selvatico in believing that the present church, restored in 1008, is the earlier building of 641, variously strengthened, refitted and modified by subsequent care, but in all its main features preserving its original aspect. I presume this would include the mosaics, and have therefore given them the benefit of doubt, as they may be part of the original church. But the subjects of the Last Judgment hardly occurs to my knowledge so

scenery which surrounds them, which is really essential to an understanding of the building and its ornament, the second volume of the *Stones of Venice* stands alone, and it is probable that most readers of this book, and all who desire to know the powers of their own language, are already well acquainted with it. Few Christians will be indifferent to a building which tells them in the most practical way of that religious imagination which was the only light of the dark ages. It is the light of old; the same symbols are continued. Again we find the Christian vine, whose various phases have been followed from the catacombs. It is combined with the acanthus — changed, yet most beautiful and delicate; and that on pillars adapted from the Corinthian, yet showing new life and ingenuity in every line and point of shade. They are due to Greece and are not Greek. He who believes in history as something more than an old almanack, or a Mississippi of falsehood, will feel a certain grave delight in seeing the landscape which environed one of her most pathetic episodes — as mighty in result, as apparently pitiable in beginning.

For the subjects of these mosaics, they follow the by their time established tradition of Greek Church-ornament. One is the eleventh century Madonna, bearing the Lord on one arm, "her tears falling as her hands are raised to bless." She is the prominent person; and we may once more mark the progress of her worship as Deity since S. Apollinare of Ravenna, where she appears holding her Son for the adoration of the Magi; and since the catacombs, where she is an Orante, representing the Church in prayer. But few who have seen it will care to forget the blue vision of Torcello, or refuse the thought that grief had taught much else to its workers, if in this matter they erred. The other mosaic is of the Last Judgment, probably the earliest existing conception of

early as the seventh or eighth centuries. The hell, the weighing of souls, and the Dantesque Satan masticating sinners in various mouths, are fierce Gothic; the Lombard carvers of S. Michele were capable of them, but they were not Greek mosaicists. This mosaic is most unlike S. Prassede of nearly the same date, if it be late seventh century. Nevertheless it is Greek to all intents and purposes, and the Amphitrite is invaluable; its close connection with Pisa is noticed in the text.

it, perhaps the earliest on record (unless Methodius's picture for the sensational King Bogoris of Bulgaria¹ be considered historical). It has relation to the Apocalyptic vision of S. Prassede; but it is different, in bringing forward for the first time the condemnation of the wicked. The treatment is, in its measure, what all imaginations of a scene beyond imagination must be—simply inadequate; not much more so than any one else's, excepting Tintoret's in the Madonna del Orto. Its composition is like that of all Byzantine or traditional representations, down to Orcagna's in the Campo Santo at Pisa, and through him to Michael Angelo's. The Saviour sits in glory, attended by the Apostles and the Blessed Virgin, with Hell and Paradise beneath Him. The just are received into Abraham's bosom, the others into hell, a red stream of the wrath of God descending from under the throne.² In the foreground are the dead of the earth arising to judgment, with the added detail of immense worms creeping in and out of the fleshless skulls (like the celebrated larvæ in *Alfonso the Brave and the Fair Imogine*). Men represented death and destruction in those days as they had seen it.

For the rest, as Byzantine mosaic is specially Byzantine, that is to say, particularly symbolic, absolutely Christian, and utterly inartistic in the modern sense, the great tides of varied taste and preference eddy round it; one loves it for its faith, another for that and its ecclesiasticism, or

¹ *Cedrenus*, tom. ii. p. 540, as cited by d'Agincourt, ninth century.

² The following is Lord Lindsay's enumeration of the subjects of the Western mosaic of Torcello. He only speaks of the Madonna of Murano, which resembles that of the Mother Church. There are five compartments: the two upper ones occupied by the Crucifixion and the Descent into Hades; the three lower, connectedly by the Last Judgment. Our Lord appears in a vesica raising His hands, palms foremost, so as to show the marks of the nails, as in Orcagna's fresco (see Prof. Ruskin's quotation of Didron in "Val d'Arno," *Oxford Lectures*, 1873). He is surrounded by the Apostles, the Blessed Virgin and Saints, and is supported by two seraphim and the throne-car of Ezekiel (see pp. 153, 163). From between its living wheels the red river of the wrath of God flows down to hell. An altar is below, with the cross and the book of life. Adam and Eve kneel by it, aged, and the Angels of judgment blow the trumpets of doom. The dead of earth and sea are "given up," or literally vomited forth, by wild beasts and sea monsters. One of the latter bears Amphitrite (a curious remembrance of old Greece by the half-Byzantine seamen of Torcello), and below, again, is S. Michael weighing souls, as in a Gothic tympanum. The redeemed in Abraham's bosom appear as children, as in Orcagna's fresco.

ascetic defiance of the bodily form ; others dislike it for one or both reasons. But most men can interest themselves in archæology who believe in history, which very many of its students seem rather far from doing. Men read history as students to get money. There is no harm in that, at all events there is no preventing it ; but meanwhile the great mass of younger students, and some older ones, never have realised the life they have read up, and think that events happened in books, and nowhere else. And men read for party ends and sham argument ; throw back reflections of nineteenth century squabbles on antiquity ; or scientifically observe the struggling lives of real men of other days from their reading chairs. Perhaps the forgiven of the past look down in another kind of rest and interest "from yon blue heavens above us bent," at the sordid luxury and suffering of our age and people. The modern use of archæology and æsthetics for theological argument is very reckless ; and we may in all humility suggest the greatest care in chronology, and observe that over-ingenuity in symbolism causes mistakes which are of the very worst result, because they make a whole subject ridiculous.

To a determined man, mere grotesques may have solemn meanings for a time ; but reaction from this sanguine spirit of interpretation may throw him into cynical disbelief in Christian art altogether. It will not do to look on historical documents, as many pictures are, with a quiet determination that they shall mean whatever pleases Heaven and ourselves. Græco-Christian workmen did adopt Greek forms, but the Church did not think more of them for that ; she was indifferent, sometimes uneasy, and did not look back to the ethnic types of her Shepherds or Vines, with the archæological eye of Raoul Rochette ; though what he says be apparently as correct as it is interesting, as it showed how it pleased God to use the cunning He had long ago given to Greece to aid the Church of Christ in the teaching of the nations.

Gibbon takes the other side ; with all the overpowering merits of his history, it is unintelligent, because deficient in humanity. He idealises all the primitive centuries of the Church into two herds, idolaters, and iconoclasts,—

prepared to shatter statues of Greek beauty which he conventionally appreciated, or to bow down before images of saints whose memory he sincerely hated. Nevertheless, the *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* is the history of the growth and victory of the Christian Church ; and it was no small fruit of her victory for men to receive the decadent and dying arts of Greece from Rome, who never knew how to use them ; to support their life by bidding them serve the faith, as of old ; and to sustain in Greek and Lombard, and German, the enthusiasm which began its long culmination with Pisano and Giotto.

In finishing this book I feel that it can be little more than a confused fragment ; and that the attempt to set forth a history of the parallel decay or revival of the three arts during the decline and fall is beyond my powers. At least, it is decidedly so without a large number of well-chosen illustrations ; many of which should be photographs, or drawings of great accuracy from object or photograph. The first book is not entirely new, much of its substance having appeared in the *Contemporary* and *Church Quarterly Reviews* in the Essay form. I have, however, gone over it all for the third time with great care, and hope that few repetitions (or as few as can be expected) are to be found in these pages. For omissions, I have referred to as few typical examples as possible, because it is no use describing without pictures ; —and, as far as possible, from the same works all round, for Architecture, Sculpture, and Painting ; so that draughtsmen who have not time for much history may be able to enter an art-library and find out a chronological series of monuments to look at. There are many dark days at South Kensington when easel and brush must be resigned, and they will be by no means wasted if the excellent art-library there be ransacked for D'Agincourt and Ciampini, *Palæographia Sacra*, and Parker's *Photographs*. It is not too much to expect a real art-student to read Ruskin, or Freeman's *Architecture* and *Sketches* ; and to possess Fergusson's *Architecture* for reading and reference.

APPENDIX.

NOTE ON MR. PARKER'S PHOTOGRAPHS.

Mr. J. H. Parker, C.B., has taken a step for which the author of this book has every reason to thank him, and which may diminish its value to some students, but will greatly increase it to the majority. He has divided his vast collection of original photographs into periods, or selected them for chronological illustration. It is now possible to see the architecture, sculpture, and painting of a period parallel with each other, and in their original relations. To tolerably well-read persons the monuments of a period *in situ* are as good as a complete restoration of that period; and the absolute reality and indisputable truth of the photograph must always have paramount importance in historical research. It is not too much to ask the student to get Fergusson's *Architecture* or even Longman's *D'Agin-court*, and the series of permanent photographs here referred to are an illustration to both books of the present state of things, which can hardly be dispensed with or overrated as to value. The separate volumes on the "Catacombs and Mosaics" will give a very large proportion of the information contained in this book to all who will really look at their illustrations. But the series illustrative of Early Christian Art is almost complete in itself.

The Catalogue with its index (Oxford, 1873, 8vo) is quite sufficient to find any separate photograph, but very much may be learned by the perhaps somewhat easy course of quietly turning over the Ancient Greek and Ancient Roman Sculpture with due comparison; by taking Christian Sculpture in the same way, realising its resemblances, its differences to earlier work, and by comparing Heathen and Christian pictures in mosaic as he has recorded them.

NOTE TO P. 138.—For another Apamean coin, so late as the time of Septimius Severus, on which the Flood itself is commemorated, see Mr. Perowne's article on "Noah" in Smith's *Biblical Dictionary*, and Eckhel, iii. pp. 132, 133.

INDEX.

INDEX.

A.

- "A," a Christian symbol, 154.
Aachen, Cathedral of, 233, 237, 242.
 Described, 239 *sqq.*
^{*}*Abakes*, or tablets for fresco, 103.
Adoration of the Magi, part of
 Scriptural Cycle, 139, 145.
Æginetan marbles, at British Museum,
 35, 38.
Ælian, 47.
Æmilius Paulus, 67.
Æschylus, 281, 283.
Agalma, 32, 33, 35, 72, 86, 281, 312.
Agape, 123, 147, 160. As a symbolic
 representation, 155—159. Distinct
 from Eucharist, 155, 156, 158. Dif-
 ferent kinds of, 156 *sqq.* Connected
 with ancestral worship, 156, 159.
 Resemblance to pictures in Pompeii,
 156, 157. Examples of, in Mith-
 raic Catacomb, 157. Disorders at,
 159.
Agasias (*Fighting Gladiator*), 42.
Agesander, 42.
Agilulf, 223, 348, 349, 354, 360.
Agincourt, see D Agincourt.
Agnes, S., Church of, at Rome, 212.
Agnolo, of Siena, 364.
Agnostic, or anti-religious view of art,
 37.
Agostino, 363.
Aidan, S., 333.
Alaric, 127, 224, 234, 258, 264, 292,
 307, 311.
Alboin, 7, 149, 183, 197, 223, 348, 349,
 352, 353, 354.
Alcibiades, 12.
Alcuin, 336, 342, 346. Bible, 328.
Alexandria, 5, 87.
Alexandrine Age of Sculpture, 41.
Alexandrinum opus, see Mosaic, kinds of.
Alfred the Great, 325, 326.
Alma-Tadema, 193.
Amalasuntha, see Theodoric.
Ambrogio, S., Church of, at Milan,
 Lombard work at, 357, 361.
Ambrose, S., 159, 165, 301, 306.
 Church of, at Milan, 198; possesses
 the Brazen Serpent, 170, 171.
Ammianus Marcellinus, 4.
Amphitheatre, influence of, on Roman
 art, 304.
Anastasius, 88, 90, 116.
Anaxyrides, 135, 145.
Anchor, a Christian symbol, 159, 160.
Andriantes and Athletic sculpture, 40
 sqq.
Angelico, Fra, 151, 210, 232, 314, 327.
Angels, a Christian symbol, 160.
Antar, the Arab, 224.
Antiphony of Monza, 311.
Antiquaries, Society of (*Vetusta Monu-
 menta*), 251.
Antonio Abbate, S., Church of, 253.
Apelles, 57, 58 *sqq.*, 256.
Aphrodite, supplants Athene as an
 ideal in art, 36 *sqq.*, 39.
Apollo, 12, 39, 50, 187; Belvedere, 42.
Apollodorus (of Athens), the first
 συναρπάξας, 54 *sqq.*
Apollodorus (*Laocoon*), 42.
Apostolic Constitutions, 161, 204, 220.
Aratus, 10.
Arch, antiquity of, 81. Used by the
 Romans, 81 *sqq.*; by the Christian
 Church, 84 *sqq.*; by the Assyrians,
 94 note. Gothic as opposed to
 Greek, 84. Significance of, in Chris-
 tian architecture, 87 *sqq.* Early
 Christian decoration of, 124. Transi-
 tion from entablature, 229 *sqq.*; varie-

- ties of construction with pillars, 229, 230. Of Constantine, 284, 298, 305, 306; of Titus, 302; of Severus, 302. Use of round and pointed, in Christian sarcophagi, 308.
- Archæology, importance of, for history, 35.
- Archaic painting, 47.
- Architecture, Rome's special gifts to, 6, 20, 74, 75, 76, 183; new style of, at Rome, at the Christian era, 34; combination of all styles at Rome, 79; progress best seen in Rome, 59, 64, 75, 76; digression of Roman from Greek, 74, 75, 77 *sqq.* Dependent on external conditions, 18, 19, 59 *sqq.* Endurance in, 23. Strict definition of, 46 *sqq.*, 66. Greek and Gothic compared, 59 *sqq.*, 188, 222, 223, 230 *sqq.*, 308, 309. Construction closely connected with decoration in, 65 *sqq.*, 68. Sepulchral, 87, 94, 105 *sqq.* The Cross in, 218 *sqq.* Byzantine, 218, 220, 226 *sqq.*; prepares the way for Gothic, 222; compared with Norman, 209, 210, 211. Early English and Norman, 209, 215. Transitions in, treated generally, 226—243. Lombard, 7, 84, 242, 243, 309, 356, 357, 358; its three epochs, 361, 362; its chief characteristics, 362.
- Arcosolium, see Catacombs.
- Airinghi's *Roma Subterranea*, 104, 116 note, 137, 143, 154, 212, 294, 307, 308.
- Ari-tides (the painter), 57, 256.
- Aristophanes, 21 note.
- Aristotle, 21 note, 49, 57.
- Arnolfo, 363.
- Ark, or *κιβωτός* of Apamea, 138, 361. Of the Covenant, 153 (see also Noah).
- Art (see also special subjects). List of authorities on, 21. Works of, important for history, 3, 4, 19, 35; in the Dark Ages, 4, 5; easily destroyed, 5, 74. Flourishes best at great centres, 5, 6. Its decadence in second century, 6. Hypotheses of, 10, 49. View of, adopted in this work, 10. Connection of, with religion, 10, 18, 19, 27, 28, 31, 37, 45, 62, 63, 69, 78; separated in later times, 45, 137. Agnostic and irreligious views of, at the present day, 37, 147. Divisions of, 46. Its analogous progress and decay in different ages, 57, 58, 59, 64, 105. Early periods of, the most artistic, 266, 267. Its points of similarity and divergence in all the great schools, 356, 357. The Grotesque in, 357 *sqq.* Reflected by history, 313, 314. Public character of, in best ages of Greece and Rome as compared with modern times, 61 *sqq.* Greek, Roman, Byzantine, Romanesque, distinguished, 195 *sqq.*, 332 *sqq.*, 358.
- ETHNIC, 19; treated generally, 3—110.
- GREEK, treated generally, 3—65. Not atheistic, 8. Decadence of, under Rome, 19, 20, 21, 284 *sqq.*, 312, 313. Preserved by the Christian Church, 19, 21, 45, 268. Its successive periods, 34. Influence of Nature-worship on, 36. Its ideal compared with the Christian, 39. Vitality of, 44. Connection of Gothic with, 45. Compared with Egyptian, 52 *sqq.* Its transference to Rome, 65 *sqq.* At Rome, treated generally, 65—96.
- ROMAN, compared with Greek, 44. Treated generally, 65—110. Not inventive, 92. Character of Græco-Roman, 68. Influence of gladiatorial shows on, 96. Cause of decay after Antoninus, 302 note.
- CHRISTIAN, Early, symbolism in, 8. Treated generally, 113—371. Modern, sacred, 146, 147. Influence of Mosaic on Byzantine, 273. Age of Constantine, 298 *sqq.* Reference to Nature by the Benedictines, 341.
- Artemis, 187.
- Arts, The Three, Preface v., 9, 21, 46, 113, 180, 195, 224, 229, 363, 370.
- Asceticism, 78, 159, 255 *sqq.*, 315.
- Assemanni, quoted, 107, 163.
- Associations of art in Rome and Florence, 43.
- Athanasius, S., 301.
- Atheism in modern art, 147.
- Athene (see also Parthenon), 12, 13, 27, 52. Statue of, in the Parthenon, 24. The goddess of the Parthenon, 35, 282, 312.
- Athenion, 57.
- Athenodorus (Laocoon), 42.
- Athens (see also special subjects). A centre of art, 6. S. Paul at, 10. Superstitions at, 13. Compared with Pisa, 20. The Partheon of, 27, 75. Simplicity of private buildings at, 61 *sqq.*, 83. Its aspect to a stranger, 61 *sqq.*
- Attalus, Palace of, 252.

Attila, 7, 234, 341, 351.
 Augustan Age of art at Rome, 93, 94,
 286; of painting, 95.
 Augustine, S., 51, 71, 159, 163, 165,
 166, 259, 333, 355.
 Aulus Plautius, 192.
 Autharis and Theodolinda, 348, 355.
 Story of, 354.

B.

BAALBEK, Ruins of, 215.
 Baptisteries and round temples, 76,
 197.
 Barbarossa, Frederick, 240, 350.
 Barrows, Celtic and Northern, 225.
 Bartimæus, in Scriptural Cycle, 147.
 Basilica (see also Christian Churches-),
 86, 87, 115, 124. Treated generally,
 180—207. Appearance of, at Rome,
 77. Early examples of, 80. The
 rudiment of all Christian churches,
 80, 193, 197. Importance of the
 term, 181. Various meanings of,
 182 *sqq.* The scenes of Christian
 persecution, 184—186. Early Greek,
 186 *sqq.* Walled-in Roman, 189.
 Earliest and latest forms of, 187.
 Church, 190, 195. Term applied to
 private houses, 190. Christian, de-
 scribed, 199 *sqq.* Decoration of,
 202. Hebrew elements in service
 of, 203 *sqq.* Saxon, 201, 240.
 Transition of, to cruciform churches,
 (see Cross and Dome), 208 *sqq.*, 226
sqq., 230 *sqq.* Most ancient ex-
 amples of, 212 note.
 Bas-reliefs, Christian, account of, 293
sqq., 307. Greek and Roman com-
 pared, 304, 305. Lombard, in
 Duomo of Monza, 360.
 Bassano, 146.
 Bassus, Junius, sarcophagus of, 289,
 300, 307, 308; described, 293 *sqq.*
 Bastard, Count, 144, 329, 331, 332,
 338.
 Bayeux Tapestry, 266, 267.
 Beauty, physical, symbolic of moral
 perfection in the best Greek art, 31.
 Study of, by Greek and Christian
 artists, 45. An object of Greek life,
 63. As a motive in art, 65, 315.
 Beccafumi, 254.
 Bede, 160, 165.
 Bekker's Charicles (Greek House), 61,
 83.
 Belisarius, 350, 352.
 Bellini, 58.
 Benozzo Gozzoli, 49, 60.
 Bernardino, S., of Siena, 219.

Birds, a Christian symbol, 160.
 Blake, 43, 320.
 Boethius, 311.
 Boldetti, 154 *sqq.*
 Boniface, S., 210.
 Books, ancient illustrated, 320, 321;
 at Rome, 321, 322.
 Borgia, Cardinal, 161.
 Bosio (Plates of the Catacombs), 116
sqq., 151, 294, 297.
 Botlicelli, Sandro, 53, 55, 306.
 Bottari, 116, 135, 136, 137, 141, 145
sqq., 151, 154 *sqq.*, 294, 307.
 Bovin, quoted, 288.
 Bramante, 196.
 Bread, a Christian symbol, 160.
 Bricks, 82, 132. Their importance for
 chronology, 82, 90, 248, 249, 269.
 Their influence on architecture, 82.
 Roman, 88, 247 *sqq.*, 252. Baby-
 lonian, 246, 247.
 British mind, tendencies of, in relation
 to art, 10.
 British Museum, Sculptures at, 24, 25,
 27, 28, 40, 43, 69, 312. Miniatures,
 328.
 Broglie, M. de, 158 note, 301.
 Brönsted, on Parthenon Sculptures,
 25.
 Brunelleschi, 6, 74, 196.
 Bryce's *Holy Roman Empire*, 120, 239
 note, 340, 348, 351.
 Burial, heathen, 108. Heathen and
 Christian, 122, 123. In the Cata-
 combs, 127, 132.
 Byzantine, or ascetic Christian art, 159,
 255 *sqq.*, 306, 307, 368. Art,
 various meanings of, 196. Arch,
 229. Monarchy, power of, 362,
 363. See also special subjects—
 Art, &c.
 Byzantium, see under special sub-
 jects.

C.

CÆSAR, JULIUS, 253.
 Caffarella (Church of S. Urban), 217.
 Calf, a Christian symbol, 160.
 Calligraphy, see Miniature.
 Caligula, 300.
 Callixtus, Tomb of, 130, 133, 135,
 155.
 Camel, a Christian symbol, 160.
 Camœna and Sylvan, 71.
 Campo Santo, at Pisa, 49, 60.
 Cana, miracle of, part of Scriptural
 Cycle, 145, 146.
 Car or Chariot, a Christian symbol,
 160.
 Caracalla, 286, 310, 350.

- Caradoc, or Caractacus, 191 *sqq.*
 Carolingian Empire, break up of, 7, 340.
 Carlyle, Thomas, 211.
 Carrey's Drawings of the Parthenon Sculptures, 26, 27, 28, 70.
 Catacombs, their monuments of decaying sculpture and painting, 5, 148, 307. Treated generally, 113—179. Compared with Greek tombs, 106 *sqq.* Construction of, 113 *sqq.*, 126, 132. S. Jerome's description of, 123. Burial in, 122. Martyrdoms in, 127. Plundered, 127. Rediscovered, 127. Later and earlier work in, 148. Paintings in, resemble those of Pompeii, 101; take place of written language, 118, 143 *sqq.*, 260; their religious significance, 139 *sqq.*, 148; scriptural Cycle of, 117, 128, 149. Jewish, 115, 118, 169. Jewish and Heathen, 122.
 Cellini, Benvenuto, 55.
 Ceryces, 13, 284.
 Charicles, Bekker's (Greek House), 61, 83.
 Charis, of Athenian art, 19, 29, 44, 58, 296.
 Charles the Great (see also Aachen, Ravenna), 201, 208, 227 note, 237, 239 *sqq.*, 243, 318, 325 *sqq.*, 328, 330, 340. Saxon Basilica, 240. His age one of transition in Europe, 240.
 Chequers, sign of the, a reminiscence from Pompeii, 99.
 Cherubs, in Hebrew worship, 153, 242, 359.
 Chiaroscuro, development of, in Greek painting, 53 *sqq.*
 Chichester, Dean of, 131.
 Christian art, 5, 8, 9, 19, 21, 41, 59, 98, 99, 100, 125, 126, 294. Materials used in early, 103, 104. Sepulchral nature of, 105, 120, 279. Begins with painting, 113 *sqq.*, 287. Byzantine or ascetic, 159, 255 *sqq.*, 306, 307, 368. Effects a renaissance, 298 *sqq.*, 370.
 Christians, Northern and Southern, 210, 211, 216, 232.
 Christianity, Influence of, on ancient civilization, 141; on Teutonic civilization, 149, 223, 353; on architecture, 183; on art, 284, 286, 294, 333, 334. Preserves other creeds, 309. Celtic as well as Latin, 333, 334.
 Church, a Christian symbol, 161. Distinguished from Templum, 187. And the Empire, 299 *sqq.* Scotch-Irish, 333 *sqq.*
 Churches, Christian, in Rome, division of, into architectural and subterranean, 87, *cf.* 208. Lord Lindsay's threefold division of, 200. Converted from heathen temples, 211 *sqq.*
Church Quarterly Review, quoted, 370.
 Chrysostom, S., 218, 334 note.
 Ciampini, 145 note, 165 *sqq.*, 251, 263, 361, 371.
 Cicero, 17 note, 68, 93, 106, 321.
 Cimabue, 53, 238, 328, 366.
 Cimon of Cleonæ, the first great Greek painter, 47.
 Claudia, see Pudena.
 Claudian, quoted, 312 note.
 Claudius, 191, 192.
 Clemens, Flavius (see Domitilla), 130, 132.
 Clement of Alexandria, 70, 71, 164, 165, 167.
 Clemente, S., Church of, 334 note. Example of primitive Basilica, 202.
 Cleomenes the Elder (Venus de Medici), 42.
 Cleomenes the Younger (Germanicus), 42.
 Cleon, 12.
 Cloaca Maxima, 81, 248.
 Clootz, Anacharsis, 298.
 Cock, a Christian symbol, 161, 162.
 Cockerell's Parthenon Sculpture, 29.
 Cœur de Lion, 149.
 Columba, S., 3, 332, 333, 336, 339—346.
 Columns, in Greek and later architecture, 214, 215. Clustered, 231. Of Antoninus, 285; of Trajan, 305.
 Composite order of architecture, 78, 79. Arcade, link between Athenian entablature and Lombard arch, 79 *sqq.*, 227 *sqq.*
 Congregations in the Primitive Church, 193, 194, 207.
 Constantia, S., Church of, at Rome, 212.
 Constantine, 3, 181, 183, 185, 195, 212, 218, 219, 226, 288. Relation of, to Charlemagne, 240.
 Constantinople, preserves some secrets of art, 74. Capture of, by the Turks, 172. Equivalent to Rome, 183, 196. Called Stamboul, 241. A centre of Greek and Gothic ideas, 296. Gladiators never exhibited at, 316.
Contemporary Review, quoted, 21 note, 281 note, 321, 370.
 Corinthian Order developed at Rome, 77.

Correggio, 42, 177.
 Cosmati, family of, 254, 255.
 Cosmas and Damianus, SS., Mosaic of, 279.
 Cottonian Collection of Manuscripts, 336 note, 337 note.
 Coulange (*Cité Antique*, Barker's Translation), 70.
 Council of Elvira, 129.
 Cromwell, disperses the collections of Charles I., 58. His attitude to Sculpture, 72.
 Cross, a Christian symbol, 144, 173, 211, 355. Ideal of, in architecture, 217, 218 *sqq.*, 227, 232. And Dome, treated generally, 208—225; impressiveness of, 221.
 Crowe and Cavalcaselle, 263, 268, 298.
 Crystal Palace, Pompeian House at, 98, 105.
 Cupola, see Dome.
 Curzon's *Monasteries*, 274.
 Cyril, his work in miniature, 339.

D.

DÆMON of Socrates, 13.
 D'Agincourt, Seroux, Preface vi, 5, 19, 21 note, 84, 87, 94, 106, 108, 117, 121, 124, 148, 189, 200 *sqq.*, 208, 212 *sqq.*, 229, 232, 237, 240 *sqq.*, 247, 286, 291, 294, 297, 302, 304, 305, 307, 315, 322 *sqq.*, 334, 338, 363, 364, 365, 368, 371, and in Appendix.
 Damascenus, S. John, 15, 100, 258, 265.
 Daniel, part of the Scriptural Cycle, 95, 131, 140.
 Dante, 250, 299.
 Dark Ages, The, 4, 269. State of the arts in, 269. Character of, 6, 7.
 David, Emeric, 209.
 Davy, Sir H. 85.
 Death, a Christian symbol, 162. Its treatment in art, 298.
 Decadence (see in special subjects), of art in second century, 6, 19; between Pericles and Augustus, 20; between Augustus and Constantine, 20; early, treated generally, 34—45; its causes, 36; its character, 36 *sqq.*
 Decoration, treated generally, 244—371. Chiefly internal in earliest Christian churches, 80, 84. Affected by heathen art in the Basilicæ, 100. Irrelevant introduction of, in Greek and Gothic painting, 102. Nature of, in the Catacomb Tombs, 115 *sqq.* Ornamental and significant, 130, 131. Affected by materials, 244 *sqq.*

Vertical and horizontal, 308, 309.
 Similarity of, in all the great schools, 356. Greek and Lombard, 359, 360.
 Deisdæmonia, an element of Greek religion, 12, 14, 15.
 Delos, 187.
 Demosthenes, quoted, 61, 282.
 Diaz, Bernal, 51.
 Dicæarchus, on Athens, 61, 83 note.
 Didron's *Iconographie Chrétienne*, 363, 368 note.
 Diocletian, 291, 300.
 Dion Cassius, quoted, 132.
 Dionysia and Panathenæa, 36.
 Dionysius Halicarnassus, 70.
 Diotisalvi, 197.
 Diptychs, 289, 306, 310, 311. Of Rufus Probianus described, 315.
 Barberini, 315. Western, 316.
 Leodiense, 316. Rambona, 317.
 Meaning of the term, 330.
 Dodona, 187.
 Dolia, a Christian symbol, 162.
 Dolphin, a Christian symbol, 162.
 Dome (see also Arch, Cross), 212, 218, 219. Soaring effect of, 221, 222. Ideal of the, 221; and Vault, 84 *sqq.* Of S. Vitale, at Ravenna, 237, 238.
 Dominica, see Basilica.
 Domitilla, S., Tomb and History of, 132, 133, 155, 248.
 Doré, Gustav, 146, 253.
 Doric Architecture at Rome, 77, 78.
 Dove, a Christian symbol, 137, 138, 162.
 Doves, The, Mosaic of, 272.
 Draconarius, 219.
 Dragon, a Christian symbol, 163.
 Drawing, a knowledge of, needful for art-study, 29, 35, 44.
 Drogon, Sacramentary of, 166.
 Dryads, 15, 71.
 DuCane, Colonel, 276.
 Duomo, of Florence, 249.
 Dürer, Albert, 40, 58.
 Durrow, Book of, 3, 335.
 Dyer's *Pompeii*, 83, 101, 323.

E.

EAGLES, a Christian symbol, 163.
 East and West, contests between, 172, 173.
 Eastlake, Sir Charles, 67.
 Eckhel, 371 note.
 Eggs, a Christian symbol, 163.
 Eginhard, 325, 326.
 Egyptian painting, character of, 52 *sqq.* Architecture and sculpture affected by material, 244, 245.

Elgin Sculptures, 20, 25, 26, 28, 31, 38, 43, 99, 313.
 Elijah, Translation of, part of the Scriptural Cycle, 139.
 Empire, The, and the Church, 299 *sqq.*
 Leads the Church into bad art, 302.
 State of, in ninth century, 340, 341.
 Invaded by the Goths, 354.
 Endurance in architecture, 23, 246. Of Egyptian sculpture, 53.
 Enlumineurs, their taste for Nature, 308, 319, 341.
 Entablature, see Arch.
 Epic of Hades, quoted, 96.
 Epigraphs, examples of, 345, 346.
 Erigena, 334 note.
 Ethnic Art, 10, treated generally, 3—110. Preserved by the Christian Church, 19.
 Etruscan, school of art at Rome, 67 *sqq.*
 Element in Roman art, 92, 114.
 Eumolpidæ, at Athens, 13, 284.
 Euphranes, 57.
 Euphranor, 40.
 Eupompus of Sicyon, 56, 57.
 Euripides (*Medea*), 304.
 Eusebius, 129, 131, 201, 287.
 Evangelaries, 147, 163, 164, 260, 319, 324, 325, 327, 328, 344, 345. List of, 331.
 Evangelic symbols, 163.
 Extra-Scriptural Cycle, 150.

F.

FABIUS MAXIMUS, 93.
 Facciolati quoted, 22 note.
 Falconet, 56.
 Fall, The, part of the Scriptural Cycle, 139.
 Family worship, 19. (See also Latins).
 Fellows, Sir C., on Greek Tombs, 106.
 Fergusson, 21 note, 23, 66, 68, 76 *sqq.*, 82, 94, 105 *sqq.*, 181, 212, 215 *sqq.*, 227, 229, 237, 371, and Appendix.
 Fetichism, 12 *sqq.*, 265.
 Ffoulkes, 309.
 Fine Arts (see also Art, Arts), importance of, to History, 3, 4. In the Dark Ages, 4, 5.
 Fir or Pine, a Christian symbol, 164.
 Firmament, a Christian symbol, 164.
 Fish, The, a Christian symbol, 164, 289.
 Fleury, Rohault de, 237 note.
 Fons Pietatis, see Four Rivers.
 Forum of Rome, 189.
 Four Creatures, The (see also Evangelic Symbols), 163, 243.
 Four Rivers, The, a Christian symbol, 165.

Four Seasons, The, a Christian symbol, 169.
 Fowler, Henry the, 341.
 France, Gothic architecture in early churches of, 233, 234.
 Francia, 168.
 Freeman, Mr., 68, 76, 195, 197, 212, 214, 217, 221, 237, 239, 348, 361, 362, 371.
 Frescoes, meaning of the term, 102, 103.
 Fulvius Nobilior, 93.
 Fuseli, 56.

G.

GABBATHA, connected with Mosaic, 253.
 Gell's *Pompeii*, 97, 323.
 Gerhard, 25 note, 29.
 Gérôme, 193.
 Ghiberti, 250.
 Gibbon, 4, 21 note, 291 note, 347, 349, 352. His view of history, 369, 370.
 Giorgione, 58.
 Giotto, 39, 49, 50, 58, 60, 162, 202, 232, 298, 303, 314, 326, 328, 344, 366, 370. Campanile of, 249.
 Giunto, 366.
 Gladiatorial shows, influence of, on art, 96.
 Gladys, see Pudens.
 Glass-Painting, and Mosaic in architecture, 80, 115, 209. Mosaic effects in, 273 note.
 Glycon (*Farnese Hercules*), 42.
 Goethe, 40, 300.
 Good Shepherd, The, the earliest Christian sculpture, 105, 134 *sqq.*, 289. The earliest symbolic painting, 264. As a Christian symbol, 115; 117, 131, 260, 369. Connected with Orpheus, 135, 237; with Hermes Criophorus, 135, 290. Never adored as icon, 153.
 Gori, on diptychs, 170, 311, 316.
 Gothic (see also Greek and special subjects). Its study of Nature, 7, 45, 57, 60, 66, 328. Its spirit compared with the Greek, 18, 28, 270. Derivation of the term, 21 note. Not synonymous with Christian in art, 125 *sqq.* Arch., 229 *sqq.* Sculpture, 233, 234.
 "Goths," their indebtedness to Greece and Rome, 4, 5, 269, 328.
 Gracchus, Tiberius, dedication of a picture by, 93, 94.
 Gravitas, Roman, 17 note.
 Greece, learned from Egypt, 21, 23, 48.

Greek Spirit, 7, 10, 11, 20; contrasted with the Gothic, 18, 28, 270; (in architecture), 59 *sqq.*, 84 *sqq.*, 121, 188, 222, 223, 230 *sqq.*, 234, 308, 309. Religion, key-note of, 10. Worship, most favourable view of, 12. Tragedians, 21 note. Temples, 22 note, 23; and Gothic ruins, feeling of, 32. Schools of painting compared with Italian, 57. School in Rome, 93, 119, 239; ends, 268; at Milan, *ib.* The language of the early Christian Church, 117, 260, 310. Myths, and the Gospel, 135, 141 *sqq.* Art, various meanings of, 195; immortality of, 309.

Greeks, The, not an irreligious people, 15. Mr. Ruskin on, 15, 16, 34. As Theists, 16. Master of Balliol on, 17, 18. Mr. Mahaffy on, 17 note, 18 note. Our masters in literature, art, philosophy, 30, 65 *sqq.*, 69, 120, 328. True lesson to be learnt from, 64.

Green's *History of the English People*, 210, 333.

Gregory I., 354, 355.

Gregory II., 291.

Griffin, The, in Italian-Lombard architecture, 242, 243, 359.

Guéranger, Dom, 274, 311, 319, 320, 327, 331, 345.

Gundobald, 223.

H.

HADRIAN, 249, 252, 289.

Hallam, on Greek and Italian Republics, 20, 353.

Hand, The, a Christian symbol, 165, 166.

Hare, The, a Christian symbol, 166.

Hatch, Rev. E. (*Bampton Lectures*), 155.

Hebert, 298.

Hemans, The late Mr. J., 74, 88 note, 109, 284, 285, 306.

Heracleitus, 6.

Herculaneum and Pompeii, 97—105, 156, 157. Authorities, 104.

Herodotus, 21 note, 52 *sqq.*, 164, 246.

Herzog, 160.

Hesiod, 12, 15, 283. Compared with Homer, 18.

Hippolytus, S., statue of, 305.

History, its connection with art, 3, 4, 95. In painting, 52, 53. Reflects contemporary life, 313, 314. Different spirits in which men read it, 369, 370.

Hobhouse, Sir J., quoted, 68 note.

Hodgkin's *Italy and her Invaders*, 287.

Holbein, 162.

Holland, Philemon, quoted, 54, 55, 58, 91.

Holy Apostles, Church of, the first example of cruciform, 226 note, 240.

Homer, 12, 21 note, 27, 52, 70, 283. Odyssey, 15. Compared with Hesiod, 18.

Honorius, 300, 307, 316; and Valentinian, Tombs of, 236.

Horace, quoted, 61, 65, 167, 189, 255, 304.

Horse, The, in art, 25. A Christian symbol, 166.

House, The Greek, 83. Adapted to a church, 87 *sqq.* As a Christian symbol, 166.

Hunt, Holman, 43, 146.

Hypotheses of Art, religious and atheistic, 10 *sqq.*, 49.

I.

ICONDULISM (see also Idolatry), 154, 167, 168, 257, 261.

Ictinus, 78.

Idolatry (*cf.* generally Book I., chapters i. and ii.). Homeric, 14. Greek rather than Roman, 51, 69, 70 *sqq.* The Church's hatred of, 86, 100, 121, 184, 288. Rise of, with saint-worship, 100, 125, 152, 153, 154, 265. Distinguished from Symbolism, 153, 154, 261. Among the Israelites, 170. Assisted by the Mosaic Pictures, 261; by Emperor-worship, 291, 292; by barbarian converts, 292, 293. Origin of, 280.

Ignatius, St., 155.

Illumination, 318. Distinguished from miniature, 318.

Images, 280. Private, 289. Gnostic, 290.

Incrustation, in architecture, 249 *sqq.* Distinguished from Mosaic, 250.

Irenæus, 290.

Isaac, sacrifice of, part of Scriptural Cycle, 139.

Isocrates, quoted, 61.

Ivory carving, 289, 315. Egyptian and subsequent, 310. In British Museum, 312. In Vatican, 312.

J.

JAMESON, MRS., 142, 163.

Jerome, S., 100, 123 note, 142, 163, 219, 299.

Jesse, Bishop of Amiens, 165.
 Jews, The, private magnificence of, 63.
 John of Pisa, 366.
 Jonah, part of the Scriptural Cycle, 139.
 Pictures and associated myths, 141 *sqq.*
 Jones, Burne, 147, 273.
 Joppa, legends of, pertaining to Jonah, 142.
 Jordan, a Christian symbol, 166.
 Jormandes, 21 note, 349 note.
 Josephus, 142.
 Jovian, 301.
 Jowett, Professor, on Romans ii., 17, 98.
 Julian, The Emperor, 158.
 Juno, Temple of, at Samos, 23.
 Jupiter, Temple of, at Agrigentum, 23.
 Justinian, 237; and Theodora, 196.
 Church of, at Bethlehem, 227.
 Justin Martyr, 88.
 Juvenal, 5, 98, 132, 217, 298, 313.

K.

KARNAK, Hypostyle Hall of, 23.
 Keble Chapel, Oxford, 126, 250.
 Kells, Book of, 326, 335.
 King Archon, at Athens, 182.
 Kingsley, Canon, 85, 142. *Hypatia*, 258.
 Knight, Gally, 202, 359, 361.
 Kräger's *De Liturgia*, 327.
 Kugler's *History of Painting*, 263.

L.

LABARTE, quoted, 115, 209.
 Labarum, 219.
 Lake, Dr., 158 note.
 Lamb, The, a Christian symbol, 140, 144, 166, 167.
 Lampridius, 289.
 Lange, on Manuscripts, 332.
 Laocoon, The, 42 and note, 181.
 Lapsi, 86, 185.
 Lararium, 289.
 Lares, 70, 71, 90.
 Lateran Basilica, 227.
 Latins, The, ancestral worship of, 70, *sqq.*; at Rome, 90 *sqq.*; inspires earliest Christian painting, 115.
 Laurentian Evangelary, see Rabula.
 Law of Rome, far-reaching influence of, 119, 120.
 Lazarus, raising of, part of Scriptural cycle, 139, 140.
 Leake, Colonel, on the Parthenon Sculptures, 25, 26.
 Legros, Professor, 39.
 Leighton, Sir F., and the English Classic school, 147.

Leo, The Isaurian, 257, 291.
 Lessing, 42.
 Letters, used as Christian symbols, 167.
 Liddell's *Rome*, quoted, 67, 252.
 Life, Greek ideal of, contrasted with the Christian, 17. Character of, in the Elgin Sculptures, 29. Difficulty in defining, 44. Of the Roman decadence, compared with modern English, 140.
 Lindsay, Lord, 35 note, 76, 84, 106, 138, 187, 189, 199, 200, 208, 212, 218, 224, 226, 361, 363, 368 note. Preface v., vi.
 Lion, a Christian symbol, 167, 361.
 Lionardo, 40.
 Lloyd's *Age of Pericles*, 21 note, 26, 27, 29, 31, 281 note.
 Loculus, its development into the tomb, 108.
 Lombards, The, change wrought in, by Christianity, 223. Treated generally, 347—371. Character of, 347, 348. Settlement and conversion of, 348, 349, 352, 354. Sculpture of, 357 *sqq.* Architecture of 361, *sqq.*
 London, study of art in, 43.
 Lord, The, life of, in Scriptural Cycle, 144, 145.
 Lucian, 40, 55.
 Lucullus, 93.
 Luitprandus, 347, 350.
 Lyre, The, a Christian symbol, 167.
 Lysicrates, monument of, at Athens, 22 note.
 Lysippus, 39 *sqq.* Like Rubens and Vandyck in sacred subjects, 41.
 Lytton, Lord, *Last Days of Pompeii*, 98.

M.

MABILLON, 168, 330, 346.
 Macaulay, Lord, quoted, 51.
 Mahaffy, Professor, 17 note, 18 note, 44, 281, 322.
 Manlius, C., 93.
 Mansel, Dr., the late, Dean of St. Paul's, 179.
 Manuscripts, treated generally, 318—346. Dr. Scholz's division of, 320. Fragility of, 321. Examples of, in classical times, 323. Different kinds of, 330. Celtic, 324, 326; their character, 332, 334, 335. Use of decoration by columns in, 344.
 Marathon, Battle of, in Pœcile, 50.
 Mythical elements in, *ib.* *sqq.*
 Marcellinus and Peter, SS., Catacomb of, 156.

- Marcellus, 93.
 Marchi on the Catacombs, 116 note, 136, 137.
 Marcus Aurelius, 126, 286, 302.
 Maria Maggiore, S., Church of, 227.
 Marriott, Wharton, the late Rev., on the Catacombs, 87, 116, 158.
 Martel, Charles, 172.
 Martial, quoted, 88, 191, 192, 193 note, 321, 322.
 Martigny, the Abbé, 160 *sqq.*, 290.
 Martin, S. of Tours, 301.
 Martyrdom, Martyrs (see also Persecutions), Relics of, 198.
 Masaccio, 202.
 Masonry of the Romans, 247, 248.
 Materials, of architecture and sculpture, treated generally, 244—277. Affect ornament, 244 *sqq.* Used in Græco-Roman wall-painting, 102 *sqq.*
 Maximus, 301.
 Menander, 10.
 Merivale, Dean, 120.
 Metal-work, 310.
 Methodius, 339. His *Last Judgement*, 368.
 Michael Angelo, 74, 350, 353, 368.
 Michele, S., Church of, at Lucca, 357. Lombard work at, 359, 362.
 Michele, S., Church of, at Pavia, 335, 357. Lombard work at, 358, 359.
 Micon, Athenian painter, 49.
 Milk, Milkpail, Christian symbol, 167.
 Milligan, Professor, 321.
 Millingen, on the Parthenon Sculptures, 25.
 Milman, Dean, 4, 100, 117, 203, 260.
 Milton, 46.
 Miniatures (see also Manuscripts, Evangelaries), 75, 312; treated generally, 318—346. Distinguished from Illumination, 318; from caligraphy, 319. Derivation of the term, 319. Historical importance of, 325. Influence on religious and other painting, 326, 327, 332. Carolingian school of, 327, 332, 336, 337. Follow Nature, 328, 329. Examples of, 329. Greek and Roman, 329. Figure, 332. English, 336; compared with Continental, 336 *sqq.*; affected by the Carolingian and Classical styles, 342—344. Grotesques, 336 and note, 338.
 Minucius Felix, quoted, 11.
 Minuscular, 330 (and see Miniature).
 Miracles, heathen, 51 *sqq.* Of Mercy, 118 note, 147.
 Mithraic Catacomb, 157, 158.
 Mnemonic of Greek art, Professor Ruskin's, 34.
 Mommsen, Dr., on the Catacombs, 122, 132, 155.
 Monochromes, 47 *sqq.* In Museo Borbonico, 48.
 Monogram of our Lord, 167, 219.
 Monotheism, 21 note. Prevalent at Athens in Periclean and subsequent ages, 11, 14, 281. Insisted on by S. Paul, 11, 14, 20. Decline of, in Greece, 36. Greek, Hebrew, and Christian compared, 280 *sqq.* Recognition of, by the Roman Senate, 306.
 Monuments, Greek, classified by Dr. Smith, 106, 107.
 Morality, Greek, 15; account of, by S. Paul, 16; Cicero on, 17; Professor Jowett on, 17. Roman, 17. Relation of, to beauty in the best Greek art, 31. Relation of, to art, 37 *sqq.* 57, 67, 78, 313 *sqq.* Pompeian and Christian, 98, 99. Ancient and modern compared, 270.
 Morgan, Rev. R. W., 191, 192.
 Mosaics, 19, 52, 75, 115, 155, 162, 199, 200, 202, 209, 212, 237, 240, 241, 242, 335, 350, 356, 363. For mural ornament, 80, 81. At Mount Sinai, &c., 151, 196. Treated generally, 244—277. Distinguished from incrustation, 250. First used in Persia, 250, 271. Different kinds of, 252 *sqq.* Important for history as embodying belief, 258, 260, 273. Used as symbols, 260. List of, at Rome and Ravenna, and remarks, 262 *sqq.* Keep alive symbolism in art, 267, 268. Character of, at end of fourth century, 271. Their limitations as an art, 272, 278, 279. Connection of, with other arts, 273. Neo-Greek colouring of, 275. Restoration of, in crypts of S. Paul's, 276. At Torcello and Church of Santa Fosca, described, 366—368, and 368 note.
 Mosaic, see Mosaic, kinds of.
 Müller, Max, 14, 26, 27, 182.
 Mummius, 67, 70 *sqq.* 93.
 Münter, Dr. F., 133, 290.
 Muratori, 268, 360.
 Murray's *Handbook*, quoted, 68.
 Museum, see Mosaic, kinds of.
 Musivum, see Mosaic, kinds of.
 Myron, 28 note, 39 *sqq.*, 283.

N.

NAIADS, 15.
 Naos, see Templum.
 Nature, study of, Greek and Gothic, 7, 45, 57, 60, 66, 328; by the Greeks, 68, 71 *sqq.*, 314, 317, 343; by the

- Benedictines, 341, 342. Greek, Roman and Modern, 73.
 Nero, 286, 300, 310.
 Newman, Cardinal, 171, 198.
 Newman, Professor F. W., 74.
 Nice, Second Council of, 154, 288 note.
 Nicias, the type of a religious Greek, 13. His superstition, 13 note.
 Nicias (the painter), 57.
 Nicomachus, 57.
 Niebuhr, 302.
 Nimbus, a Christian symbol, 167, 168.
 Nineveh, 242, 246.
 Niobe group, fragments of, in Florence and Munich museums, 39.
 Nike Apteros, temple of, 43.
 Noah and Dove, Classical and Lombard, 138. Ark of, as a Christian symbol, 161.
 Nointel, Marquis de, 26, 28, 70.
 Northcote's *Roma Subterranea*, 117, 131, 168, 169, 272.
 Northern art, see under special subjects, Art, &c.
 Northmen, the, 240 *sqq.*
- O.
- "ω" (minuscular), a Christian symbol, 154.
 Ober-Ammergau Passion-spiel, Tableaux of, and remarks, 174 *sqq.*
 Odovaker, 351.
 Oil-painting, unknown to the ancients, 103.
 Olaf, S., 210.
 Olive-branch, a Christian symbol, 168.
 Oranti, a Christian symbol, 168.
 Orcagna, 20, 49, 60, 162, 327, 368.
 Orders, Greek and Roman, 77 (and see Architecture, &c.).
 Orpheus, 135.
 Ostrogoths, their relation to art, 350. History of, 351 *sqq.*
 Otho III., 240.
- P.
- PÆSTUM, 246.
 Painting (see also special subjects, Christian Art, &c.) Treated generally, 46—64. Definition of, 46 *sqq.* Influenced by miniature, 326.
 Egyptian, character of, 52 *sqq.*
 Greek, origin and processes of, 47. Combined with sculpture, 48. Development of chiaroscuro in, 54 *sqq.* Progress of, under Zeuxis, 55 *sqq.* Alexandrine period of, 57 *sqq.* Decay of, parallel with decline of the Greek character, 57.
 Roman: in the Tarquinian tombs, 94, 95. At Pompeii, 95. Augustan age of, 95. Græco-Roman treated generally, 97—110; rapid decadence of, 98 *sqq.*; materials used in, 102 *sqq.*
 Catacomb, 5. Treated generally, 113—179.
 Palm-branch, a Christian symbol, 168, 169.
 Pamphilus of Amhipolis, 57.
 Panoenus, 53 *sqq.* Compared to Holbein, 49.
 Panels, used for painting, 103.
 Panselinus, Manuel, 363.
 Pantheism, an Aryan growth, 14. Among the Greeks, 12, 15, 37, 51, 71 *sqq.* Connected with modern Christian Polytheism, 15, 293.
 Pantheon, 22 note, 23, 196, 215. Greatest example of a round temple, 76, 222. Compared with the Parthenon, 81.
 Papyrus, Egyptian, 320; (and cf. Books).
 Parker, Mr. J. H., quoted, 74, 233, 265, 286, 289, 291. His *Photographs*, Preface vi., 9, 229, 371, and Appendix; House of Pudens, 82, 88, 89, 90; Pompeian, &c., 97, 101, 135, 322; Catacombs, 116 *sqq.*, 136, 157, 168, 169, 173; materials and mosaics, 251, 262, 263, 272; various, 173, 212, 214, 285, 294, 305, 307.
 Parrhasius, 55 *sqq.*, 256. *πορρογράφος*, 57.
 Parthenon, the, 17, 21, 35, 42, 62, 195, 215, 228, 246, 282, 305, 308, 365. Treated generally, 22—33. The central building of classical antiquity, 23, 32; of the world, 69, 188. Stability of, 23. Described, 23, 24. Arrangement of its sculptures, 24—27; their technical merit, 29, 30; their religious import, 30, 31, 78.
 Paschal I., 127, 279.
 Patrick, S., 3, 332, 333.
 Paul I., 127.
 Paul the Deacon, see Warnefrid.
 Paul, S., 98, 168, 190 *sqq.*, 204. At Athens, 10. His criticism on Greek religion, 11; on heathen morals, 16, 20; appeals to Greek Monotheism, 11, 14, 20, 21, 281. A friend of Pudens, 88. Tomb of, 116 note.
 Paul's, S., London, Dean of, 119, 179, 276. Decoration of, 178, 249.
 Paulinus, Bishop of Tyre, 201.
 Paulinus of Nola, 101, 159, 174, 202, 333, 339.
 Pausanias, 22 note, 72.

- Pausanias (the painter), 57.
 Pausias of Sicyon, 57.
 Pax Romana, 92, 120, 341.
 Peacock, the, a Christian symbol, 169.
 Pelagius, 333.
 Penrose (Mosaics), 276.
 Pergamus, picture by Apollodorus at, 55.
 Pericles, 14, 52, 106, 284.
 Perret on the Catacombs, 116 note.
 Persecutions of the Christians, 126, 127, 131, 184—6, 193, 198. Were originated by the Roman Empire, 300 *sqq.*
 Perugino, 168.
 Peter ad Vincula, S., Church of, 214
 Peter, S., 116, 118, 161, 204.
 Pheidias, 9 *sqq.*, 19, 28, 55, 60, 69, 256, 282, 305, 312, 353, 363, 365. The sculptor of Athene, 37. Revealed Zeus, 40, 281, 283. Question of his superiority, 44. His relation to Pisano, 188, 284.
 Phigalean Marbles, 43.
 Philo, 30.
 Phoenix, see Palm-branch.
 Pictures in Augustan Rome, 323.
 Piloty, 193.
 Pisa, 135, 162, 202. Baptistery of, 76, 79, 197, 364. Cathedral of, 362. The centre of a renaissance of Greek art, 363, 364. Representative of various types of art, 364 *sqq.*
 Pisano, Niccola, 195, 238, 328, 344, 353, 357, 363 *sqq.*, 370. Recurs to the Greek style in sculpture, 7, 10, 60, 64, 74, 183, 188, 197, 223, 268, 284, 314, 342, 343. His sculpture described and characterised, 364, 365.
 Pius Antoninus, 249.
 Pius I., 88.
 Pius VI., 109.
 Placidia, life of, 234, 235. Chapel of, at Ravenna, 220, 227, 233; interesting as an example of cruciform church, 235 *sqq.*; described, 236, 237.
 Plato, 14, 182, 282.
 Pliny the Elder, 53, 56, 58, 70, 91, 107, 142, 251, 252, 272, 320.
 Pliny the Younger, 126, 185, 300.
 Plumptre, Mr., 170, 203.
 Plutarch, quoted, 54, 70.
 Pæcile Stoa at Athens, 49, 61.
 Polidori, Signor, 165.
 Polybius, 67.
 Polycarp, S., 185, 210.
 Polycleitus, 40, 256, 283. Doryphorus of, 40.
 Polygnotus, not to be confounded with Polycleitus, 47. Lesche of, at Delphi, 48. His type of painting, 49 *sqq.*, 54, 57.
 Polytheism, Christian, 15, 265.
 Pompeii, 95, 209, 323. Character of wall-paintings at, 97 *sqq.*; compared with those of the Catacombs, 97, 101; colouring of, 104, 105; landscape, 101, 105. And Herculaneum, 83, 156, 157. Treated generally, 97—105. Authorities for, 104.
 Pomponia Græcina, 192, 193.
 Portrait, Roman, 92, 96, 305. Use of, in churches, 151, 152.
 Powell, Mr., his opaque glass, 254.
 Poynter, Professor, 68, 146, 186.
 Praxiteles, 40, 42, 55, 256. Sculptor of the Hetæra, 29; of Aphrodite, 36 *sqq.* Niobe and Lais of, 39.
 Preface, v.
 Prince Consort, Memorial Chapel of, at Windsor, 253.
 Priscillian, 301.
 Probus and Proba, Tomb of, described, 297, 298.
 Procopius, 306.
 Prudentius, 115, 131, 162, 209.
 Progress, Human, illusory nature of, 69, 70.
 Protogenes, 57 *sqq.*
 Pudens, House of, 86, 87 *sqq.*, 190 *sqq.* Family of, 88, 191. History of, 191 *sqq.*
 Pudentiana, S., Church of, see Pudens.
 Puritanism, effect of, on art, 45, 58.
 Pyramids, stability of, 23, 245, 246, As barrows, 225.

Q.

- QUAST, A. F. VON, 237.
 Quincey, De, 171.
 Quinoy, Quatremère de, 25, 28, 313.
 Quintilian, 47.

R.

- RABULA, the Syrian monk, 339, 341, 342, 344. Evangeliary of, 107, 319, 324, 334, 337, 355.
 Radagaisus, 307.
 Rafael, 55, 57 *sqq.*
 Randolph Gallery, at Oxford, 39.
 Ravenna, 224. Described, 235, 236. Church of S. Apollinare in Classe at, 235; of S. Vitale, 236, 237. See also Mosaic.
 Rawlinson's *Herodotus*, quoted, 53, 171.
 Relics of martyrs found beneath altars, 198.
 Religion, its connection with art, 10, 18, 19, 27, 28, 31, 37, 45. Its real character among the Greeks, 10 *sqq.*, 75, 78.
 Religious Art, Modern, requires certain restrictions, 127—129, 149.

- Rembrandt, 55.
- Renaissance, character of art in a period of, 267, 268. Meaning of the term, 316, 317. Early Tuscan or Etrurian, 4, 10, 19, 74, 75, 183, 268, 306, 328, 332, 342, 353, 356, 362, 363. Vitruvian, 8. Atheistic, 8. Byzantine, 9, 120, 220. Cinque-Cento and later Italian, 8, 15, 55, 74, 196; its views of classical and Gothic art, 125; severs art from religion, 137. Seventeenth-century Italian, 57.
- Republics, Greek and Italian, compared by Hallam, 20, 353.
- Res Diplomatica, 330; (and see Miniature).
- Revolution, the, view of Greek art induced by, 15.
- Reynolds, Sir J., 56, 273 note.
- Rhodian sculpture, 40.
- Rio, Count, 21, 38.
- Rochette, Raoul, 102, 134 *sqq.*, 141, 155 *sqq.*, 369.
- Rock, a Christian symbol, 169.
- Romanesque, Lombard or Frank, meaning of, 197. Arch, 229 *sqq.*
- Roman art, various meanings of, 196.
- Rome (see also special subjects). Her constructive gifts to architecture, 6, 20, 74. A centre of architecture, 6. Decline of Greek art under, 20, 21. No invention in art, 44, 92. Transferred Greek art to the Gothic races, 64, 65, 66, 76, 92, 183, 341. Native or Etruscan art at, 67. Absence of image-worship at, 69, 70. Originated no sculpture, *ib.* Only collected works of art, 74, 93, 304; compared with England in this respect, 74, 304. Pax Romana, 92. Influence of gladiatorial shows on art of, 96. Prepared the way for the Christian faith, 119, 149. Law of, 119, 120, 270. Three first sackings of, 127; by Alaric, 259. Forum of, 189. Saying of Augustus as to, 248. State of, after the fourth century, 258 *sqq.*, 303, 340.
- Rosamund, see Alhoin.
- Rossi, De, 102, 104, 116 *sqq.*, 130, 136, 154 *sqq.*, 306.
- Roux, M., on Pompeii, 101, 104.
- Kufus, family of, 192.
- Ruins, Gothic and Greek compared, 31, 32.
- Ruskin, Professor, 15, 16, 21 note, 28, 34, 38, 40, 46, 49, 57, 65 *sqq.*, 84, 118, 124, 136, 138, 168, 197, 221, 229, 232, 233, 236, 245, 250, 266, 281, 298, 309, 312, 334, 336 note, 342, 356, 357, 359, 364, 366, 367, 368 note, 371.
- S.
- SACRED PAINTING, modern treatment of, 146, 147.
- Sadler, Mr., on Agapæ, 156.
- Saints, pictures of, in churches indefensible, 152.
- Salviati, M., 253.
- Santiago, supernatural appearance of, 51.
- Saracens, the, 241.
- Sarcophagus (see also Tombs). Meaning of the term, 107.
- Savonarola, 58.
- Scaurus, 93.
- Scipios, the, their view of art, 93. Tomb of, 94, 108 *sqq.*; first discovered and rifled, 109.
- Scriptorium, ancient and modern, 274, 318, 327, 335, 342.
- Scriptural Cycle, 117, 128. Treated generally, 129—149. List of, 133. New Testament, 144 *sqq.*
- Sculpture (see also Statues). Models, &c., recommended for study of, 34. Definition of, 46 *sqq.* Connected with painting, 47; combined with painting, 48. Remains of, in the Catacombs, 5. Renaissance of in thirteenth century, 7. Egyptian, endurance of, 53. Greek, of the Parthenon, 24—27; its beauty and significance, 27, 31. Calmness of Early Greek, 38, 39. Athletic and portrait, 40, 41. Rhodian, 40, 41. Alexandrine age of, 41. Roman, 20, 44, 69, 70, 71, 90, 91, 283; its decadence, 284. Last period of, in Rome, 285, 300, 305. Under the Roman Emperors, 286, 287. Replaced by Mosaic after the seventh century, 75, 305. Expires with Charlemagne, 241. Christian, 267, 268; treated generally, 278—317; its divisions, 287. Christian feeling in regard to, 287. Lombard, revives the Greek spirit, 7, 75. Lombard sculptors, 242, 284, 356, 357 *sqq.* Lombard, compared with Græco-Byzantine, 358. Norman, 308. Florentine, 366.
- Seeman (*Götter und Heroen*), 21 note, 42 note, 135, 290.
- Σηκολ, 22 note, and *cf.* Templum, 76.
- Senecca, 304, 321.
- Sepulchral Architecture, 87, 94, 105 *sqq.*, 114.
- Serpents, a Christian symbol, 170, 172. At Milan, 170. At Constantinople, 171. De Quincey on, 171, 172.
- Servius, quoted, 22 note.

- Severus, Alexander, 289.
 Ship, a Christian symbol, see Noah.
 Sismondi, 347, 351.
 Slavery in Greece, 16.
 Smith (*Dictionaries*), 29, 87, 88, 91, 106, *sqq.*, 116, 124, 126, 130, 133, 135, 136, 145 *sqq.*, 157, 189, 209, 212 *sqq.*, 219, 311, 338, 371 note.
 Socrates, 21 note. His belief in a Demon, 13.
 Sophia, S., church of, 217 note.
 Sophocles, 278.
 Sophrosyne, the Greek ideal of life, 17.
 South Kensington Museum, Preface, vi.
 Mosaics at, 263. Ivories at, 312.
 Pulpit of Niccolò at, 364.
 Spalatro, Diocletian's palace at, 84, 227, 228.
 Sparta, character of, 6.
 Stag, a Christian symbol, 161.
 Statues (see also Sculpture). Comparative size of, 35; of athletes, 41. Tinted, 48, 312. Rare in early Christian churches, 287. Compared with pictures as objects of worship, 287 *sqq.* Connected with Emperor-worship, 288, 289, 291, 292. List of best known Christian, 289. Chryselephantine, 312, 313.
 Stefano, S., Rotondo, 200; described, 213.
 Stilicho, 301, 307, 311, 316.
 Street, Mr., quoted, 82.
 Stuart's *Antiquities of Athens*, 28, note.
 Suetonius, quoted, 75, 132, 248.
 Sulla, 93, 251.
 Sylla, see Sulla.
 Symbolism, in Egypt and Greece, 8. Christian, 8, 45, 200; treated generally, 150—179; classical forms in, 8, 130, 307, (*in Agapè*) 157, 158; by pictures, 118 *sqq.*, 128, 339; in vertical architecture, 232; distinguished from idolatry, 153, 154, 290; historical and commemorative, 150, 154; in the Miniatures, 336 note.
 Symbols, Christian, those current in Early Church enumerated, 134 *sqq.*, 264; Cherubs, 242, 243. Alphabetical list of, 154—174.
 Synagogue, similarity of its service to that of the Early Church, 203.
- T.
- TACITUS, 191, 192.
 Tafi, 238.
 Temenos, see Templum.
 Templum, and nomenclature, 22, 76, 77, 187 *sqq.* Derivation of, 22. Development of, 23. Insignificance of, in Republican Rome, 76. Pantheon, example of a round, 76. (See also Basilica.)
 Tertullian, 86, 134, 164, 169, 170, 184, 218, 288, 290, 334 note.
 Tessellatum opus, see Mosaic, kinds of.
 Tessin, Dom, 330.
 Texier and Pullan, on Byzantine architecture, 216, 226, 245, 247, 248.
 Thackeray, 185.
 Theatre, Athenian, connected with sculpture, 36.
Θείον, importance of the Greek expression, 11, 281. Socrates' idea of, 13.
 Theodolinda, 223, 348, 349, 354, 360.
 Theodoric, the Goth, 223, 224, 236, 237, 348, 349, 350, 351 *sqq.* Sepulchre of, described, 224, 350; the sole relic of Gothic architecture, 350.
 Theodosius, 300. Code of, 303. Obelisk of, 307.
 Theon, 57.
 Theseus, 69, 223. The Attic Heracles, 12, 25. Temple of, 43, 48.
 Thessalonica, a chief seat of Byzantine art, 363.
 Three Children, the, part of the Scriptural Cycle, 139, 140.
 Thucydides, 21 note, 61, 83 note, 106.
 Tiberius, 286.
 Timanthes, 55. His *Veiled Agamemnon*, 56.
 Timothy, S., 193.
 Tintoret, 58, 151, 177, 308, 366, 368.
 Titian, 55, 136 *sqq.* *Venus* of, 42, 58, 366.
 Tombs, Etruscan, at Tarquinii, &c., 94 *sqq.* At Xanthus, 106. At Jerusalem, 106, 108. Of Scipio, 94, 108, 109; of Statilius Taurus, 97, 135; of Theodoric, 224; of Honorius and Valentinian, 236; of Zosimus and Damasius, 307. Street of, at Pompeii, 95. Gothic and Greek, 105 *sqq.* Greek, classified, 106. Roman preference on the matter, 123. As altars, 124. Decoration of, 124.
 Torrita, 238.
 Tours, Battle of, 7.
 Toustain, Dom, 330.
 Town-life of Rome and the Gospel, 140.
 Tozer, Rev. H. F., 274.
 Trajan, 286.
 Trench, Archbishop, 182.
 Triangle, a Christian symbol, 173.
 Turner, 43, 221, 314.
 Tyre, Cathedral of, described, 201.
 Tyrwhitt's *Art Teaching of the Primitive Church*, 9, 107 note, 133, 162 *sqq.*, 243, 276, 311.

U.

ULYSSES AND THE SYRENS, as an emblem, 174.
Urns of the Empress Helena and S. Constantia, 307.

V.

VARINGER OR VARANGIANS, 241.
Varro, 321.
Vasari, 238, 240, 268, 363 note.
Vaulting-shafts, 230; and see Arch.
Venables, Canon, 130, 133, 139.
Venice, Lagoon of, 236. Continues the traditions of Byzantine art, 364. Connections with Cathedral of Torcello and Church of Santa Fosca, 366, 367.
Venus of Melos, or Samian Here, 26, 38. Of Titian, 42. Temple of, at Aphrodisias, 216.
Verona, a centre of Teutonic invasion, 364.
Verres, 93.
Vertical and Horizontal, see Architecture, transitions in.
Verus, 302.
Via Labicana Catacomb, 156, 157.
Victories (in Sculpture), 302, 304.
Vinc, as a Christian symbol, 8, 115, 117, 131, 134, 260, 264, 289, 359, 367, 369. Classical, Byzantine, Gothic, and Renaissance, 136, 137.
Virgil, 90, 91, 92, 103.
Virgin, The Blessed, in Scriptural Cycle, 145. Cultus of, 265.
Visconti, 25 note.
Vitale, S., Church of, at Ravenna, 52, 151, 168, 173, 238. Connects Eastern and Western architecture, 233, 238. Described, 237 *sqq.*
Vitruvius, 299. On fresco and painting, 103, 104. On Basilicas, 186.

W.

WARNEFRID, PAUL, the Deacon, 4, 349, 350, 352, 353, 354, 358, 360.
Watts, the painter, 147; on Sculpture, 28.
Wellbeloved's *Eboracum*, 82.
Welcker, on the Parthenon Sculptures, 25, 26, 28 and note, 29.
Westwood, Professor, 3 note, 144, 265, 286, 289, 291, 310, 311, 312, 315, 320, 326, 330, 334, 335, 336, 338, 342, 343.
Whyte-Melville, General, on "horses" in art, 25.
Wiener, P. E., 249.
Wilson, Bishop, 178.
Winckelman, 71. On poetry in words and by symbolism, 31.
Wolf and Twins, group of, 67, 105.
Women, position of, in Greece, 16, 17.
Words, change of meaning in, 182.
Wornum's *Epochs of Painting*, 49, 52 *sqq.*, 55 *sqq.*

X.

XOANA, 12, 48.

Y.

YONGE, MISS, 370 and Preface v.

Z.

ZELLER, PROFESSOR, 11, 14, 21 note, 281 note.
Zenone, S., Church of, 309. Lombard work at, 357, 358. Bronze gates at, 361.
Zeus, 12, 13 *sqq.*, 20, 187.
Zeuxis, 55. Character of his painting, 55 *sqq.*
Zimisces, John, 170.

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